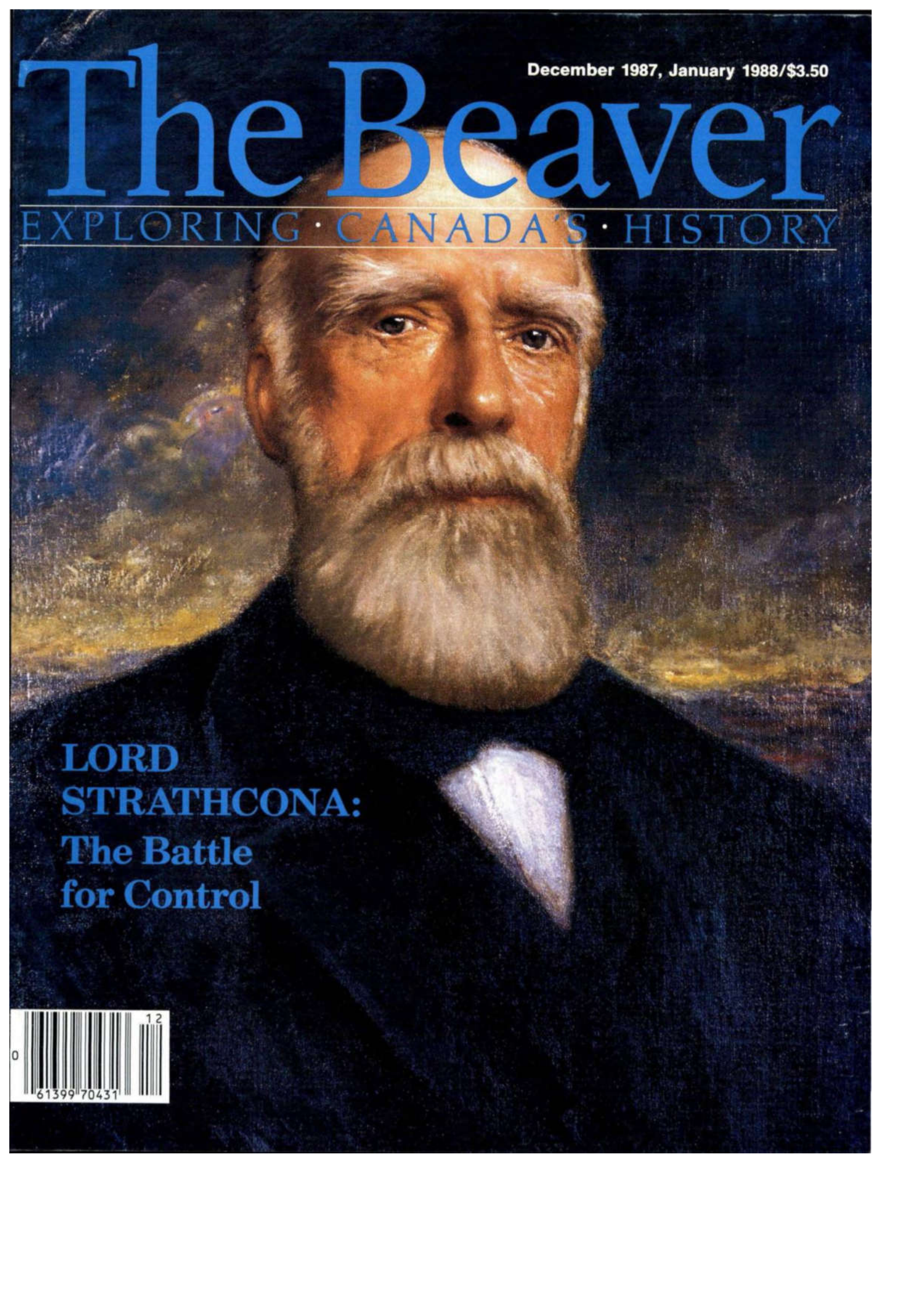


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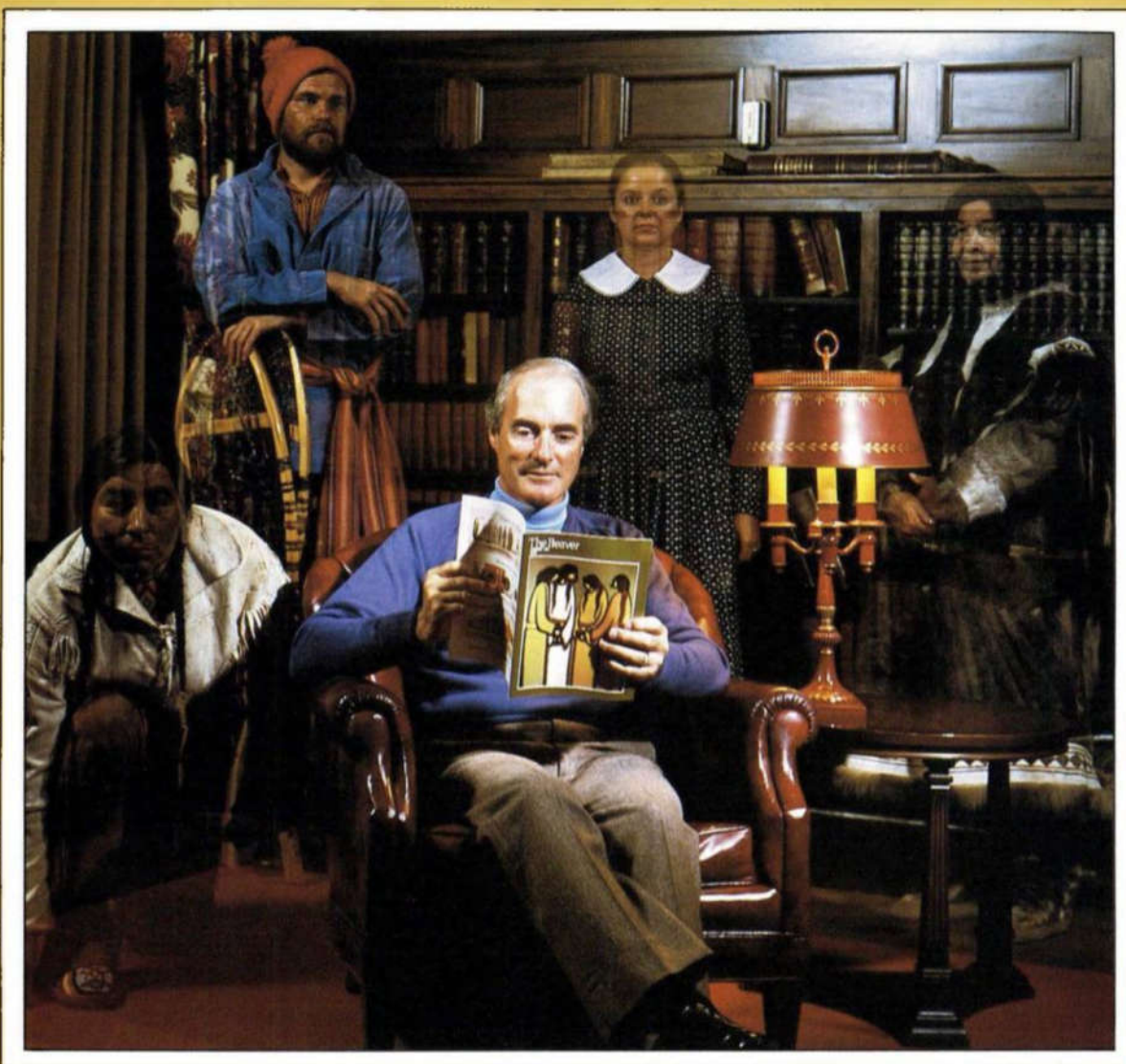
EXPLORING · CANADA'S · HISTORY

A detailed oil painting of Lord Strathcona, an elderly man with a full white beard and mustache, wearing a dark blue suit and a white shirt with a dark tie. The background is dark and textured, with some lighter, yellowish-green areas on the left and right sides.

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STRATHCONA:**
The Battle
for Control



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For the Hudson's Bay Company the second half of the nineteenth century was one of adaptation and change. The process began in the 1850s with a parliamentary inquiry into the Company's chartered rights, with the decline of the powers of Sir George Simpson, Governor-in-Chief of its North American operations (who was to die in 1860); and the death of a strong London-based Governor, Sir John Henry Pelly in 1852. The process continued in the 1860s. The Company was sold in 1863, and the old management and shareholders gave up their interests. By 1870 royal assent had been given to the Surrender of Rupert's Land. While the Company had given up its political direction of Rupert's Land, it remained an influential player in the vast area with its land holdings and its extensive trading network.

By the beginning of the 1870s it became increasingly clear to the London Committee that with the advancement of settlement, land sales, and the beginning of railways, barter methods of trade were no longer suitable. One Company solution was to separate, in the interests of efficiency, land sales from the fur trade. Accordingly, in 1874 George Goschen, then Governor of the Company and later a well-known British political figure, and Deputy Governor Eden Colville created the Land Department. Donald A. Smith was appointed the first Land Commissioner. Smith, born in 1820, had joined the Company as an apprentice clerk in 1838 through the influence of his uncle, a former 'Nor'wester. Under George Simpson, he had spent thirty years at minor posts on the St. Lawrence and in Labrador. Following his role in the events of 1869-70 at Red River, as one of the three special commissioners for the Canadian Government, he had been appointed Chief Commissioner of the Hudson's Bay Company. In 1874 Smith was appointed Land Commissioner and James A. Grahame Chief Commissioner.

As Land Commissioner Smith did not accomplish much, partly owing to the delays by the Canadian Government in opening up the West to settlement, and to the depressed economic conditions of the 1870s, and also to Smith's own temperament. He allowed no one to penetrate his hard Scottish facade and he could not work in committee nor delegate authority; in addition he did not understand business accounting. Seven years after he joined the Company, Governor George Simpson had written to him complaining: "Your counting house department appeared to me in a very slovenly condition, so much so, that I could make very little of any document that came under my notice". When Smith resigned in 1879 he cited personal reasons, but he was astute enough to know that to acquire power over the Company he had, in fact, to leave it. In fairness to Smith, he no doubt wanted to devote more time to the charge that his election as Member of Parliament for Selkirk was secured by bribery (in 1880 the

election was declared void) and to his developing railway interests. He was a partner in the St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba Railway and was to become a member of the 1881 syndicate that built the Canadian Pacific Railway. Among his legacies to the Hudson's Bay Company were his failure to get compensation from the Canadian Government for losses the Company had suffered in the Red River uprising in 1870, his estrangement from James Grahame, Chief Commissioner, and a political career which had been a liability because of his failure to support Sir John A. Macdonald in 1873.

Smith's successor as Land Commissioner was Charles Brydges who seemed a divinely ordained choice. By background and temperament Brydges was the direct opposite of Donald A. Smith. He was urbane, frank and open, an experienced business man, and on friendly terms with government officials. He could also be impetuous and meddlesome. Born in London in 1827 he had come to Canada in 1853 as Managing Director of the Great Western Railway. In 1874 he had been appointed General Superintendent of Government Railways by the Liberal Mackenzie Government. Yet in 1879, when Brydges became interested in the position of HBC Land Commissioner, the newly elected Conservative Prime Minister, Sir John A. Macdonald, intervened on his behalf as did Sir John Rose, a member of the Hudson's Bay Company's London Committee and Macdonald's Finance Minister from 1867 to 1870.

After the London Committee had interviewed and accepted Brydges they wrote Smith asking for his co-operation in the transfer of power in the Land Department. Smith was to be retained by the Company as advisor for two years at an annual honorarium of 250 pounds beginning 1 June 1879. Before Smith resigned, he had lost the confidence of the London Committee but both Goschen and Colville knew that he had to be carefully handled, the more so since he was also a shareholder. In a letter to Sir John A. Macdonald dated 13 March 1879 Rose confided:

"I think you should know, in confidence, that our plan is to place Brydges in a position where he can . . . make himself master of the whole business, and ingratiate himself into a good opinion of the officers . . . I know you will readily appreciate our difficulties in not doing so much at once as we should have desired to do. Donald Smith only tendered his resignation from the 1st June, and we did not like to quarrel . . .". It was a course in which Brydges acquiesced. Although the Committee tried to keep Brydges' true mandate confidential, Smith learned about it and told Grahame. One speculates whether Smith had an informer in the London or Winnipeg office or both. There is some reason to think that William Armit, appointed Company Secretary in January 1871, and Smith may have been confidantes.

Under the 1870 Deed of Surrender the Company was to receive approximately seven million acres of farm lands, and 50,000 acres around its trading posts. However, when Brydges arrived in Winnipeg in 1879 there was no legal, accounting, or administrative system in place to manage it. Some lands had been sold at Fort Garry in the 1870s, but there was no register or books recording sales. No surveys had been made of the properties and, until this was done, it was impossible to put prices on the land. The whole had to be created. Brydges warned the Committee in London that for the next two or three years Land Department expenses would be heavy, and that for the first year advertising costs would be five to six thousand dollars. Brydges realized that research, development and advertising were essential to the Land Department's

possible, this adverse criticism probably increased the tensions between the two men.

Smith's lack of co-operation did not, however, deter Brydges from entering into his new job with energy and interest. During the first six months he received patents for 2,336 acres of land; settled the land question for the Presbyterian, Episcopal and Methodist Churches in Winnipeg, visited West Lynne and Emerson where he sold 15 lots, drew up new maps for Winnipeg, made plans for building new stores in Winnipeg, Portage la Prairie, and West Lynne, and travelled by boat and wagon to Fort Carlton. He was getting a first hand look at the country and prophetically noted that "what are now called wet lands, or sleughs, will, as the country becomes settled, and drainage works are undertaken, become most valuable grazing lands,

"A Desire To Worry Me Out"

DONALD SMITH'S HARASSMENT OF
CHARLES BRYDGES, 1879-1889

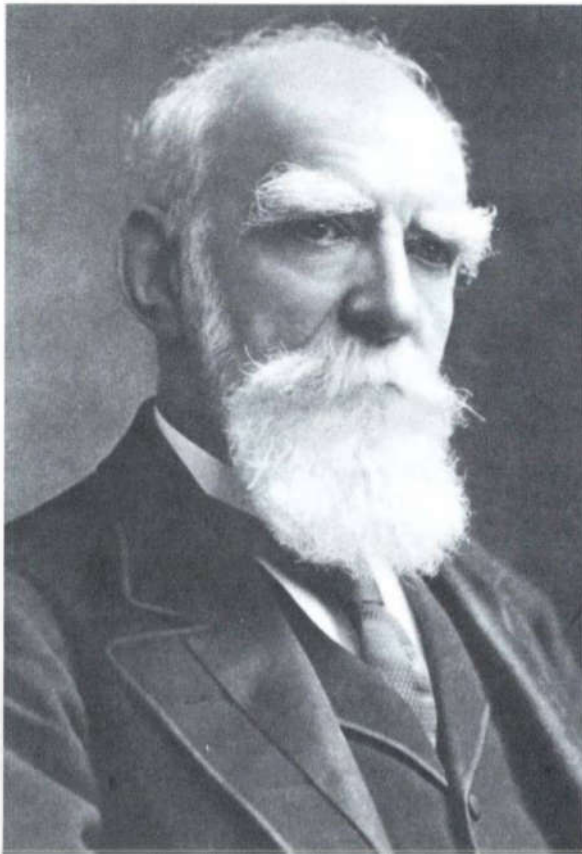
By Shirlee A. Smith

good business operation. In this sense, he was to be the first modern manager employed by the Company in Canada.

The first year was indeed a difficult one for Brydges and, in his usual frank way, he did not hesitate to tell the London Secretary of his problems, many of which involved the previous management of Donald A. Smith. He wrote that he had not received from Smith any books or letters connected with the Land Department. Some back taxes dated to 1872, but when he showed the tax statement to Smith the latter could provide no information on it. He also asked Smith about the title to land at Frog Point but was told that Smith knew nothing about it nor could he tell Brydges where to get details. If Smith was being informed about the contents of Brydges' letters to London, which seems

and should on no account be disposed of at present." He saw splendid wheat fields with an average of 30 bushels to the acre, some as high as 40. He advocated the building of grist mills at Riding Mountain and Fort Ellice stating "In this country a grist mill and a store form the nucleus of a future city". He was aware of public relations and took with him across the country Thomas White, M.P. for Cardwell, who was not only an influential supporter of Sir John A. Macdonald but also editor of the *Montreal Gazette*.

Brydges' accomplishments during his first two years were remarkable. In the meantime, Smith was carefully laying the foundation for control of the Land Department and ultimately of the Company. In November 1880 he attended, in London, the General Court, as the general meeting of the Hudson's Bay



Donald A. Smith: "A good hater".

Company was called. As the first speaker he spoke at great length, and boasted about his own knowledge of the country. At the same time he was condescending to Sir John Rose, who had supported Brydges and who was now Deputy Governor. He said that Rose, having "a very intimate acquaintance with the affairs of Canada generally . . . had not that personal knowledge of the affairs in the North West of the Country". He commented on the great expense of surveying land, none of which had as yet been sold. When one of the shareholders said that his observations were valuable but that he did not want to hear any more, Smith was not at all embarrassed but continued on repeating his point about surveying costs and asserting that Company lands could not command prices like those adjacent to the railroads. It seemed at best disingenuous of Smith to criticize the Land Department when he was being paid by the Company to ensure a smooth transition between his management and that of Brydges. If he were speaking as a shareholder there was a conflict of interest.

When in February 1881, the Canadian Pacific Railway bill was given royal assent the pace of life in Winnipeg quickened. Brydges was summoned to London that month to discuss land sales with the Governor

and Committee. He also met with the directors of the new Canadian Pacific Railway, and with Sir A.T. Galt, High Commissioner for Canada, to ascertain if there could be a plan for joint sales of land. But the Government of Canada wished to attract settlers and future tax payers; and the railway wanted settlers to buy their land and contribute to railway traffic, while the Company had no object except to profit from its land sales. It was decided therefore that each party would make its own arrangements, but that all three would work together to assist each other wherever possible. Brydges reported the results of his conversations to the Governor and Committee who expressed their approval. Smith was also in London at the same time as Brydges, but the reason for his visit is not mentioned in the Company records, so that he may have been part of the CPR contingent.

While Brydges was in London, Eden Colvile, now Governor, told him that Smith was not to have offices in the new Land Department building being built in Winnipeg, and that James A. Grahame should rent out the space as quickly as possible. No evidence exists for Colvile's reasons, but as Smith was not in favour with the London Committee, they probably did not want him on the premises of their Canadian Headquarters. Before the offices could be rented however, Smith preempted Brydges. He arrived in Winnipeg and rented two rooms above Brydges' office, telling Grahame, less than truthfully, that "the matter was quite understood in London". Smith was now in a good geographical position to observe Brydges' management.

By the time Brydges returned to Winnipeg in late April 1881, he was met with the "maddest kind of speculation rampant". The previous year 50x120 ft. lots on the Company's reserve sold for an average of \$295.00. In April 1881 the average price per lot was \$813.00, and by August the price had climbed to \$1,502.00. The following year Brydges had to rent the largest room in the city to accommodate the 500 people who wished to buy Company lands. The bidding was spirited and active, although Brydges warned London that some of the purchasers would forfeit their deposits as the auction was "perfectly wild".

Donald A. Smith was in Winnipeg during part of this real estate frenzy. Later, in a long discussion with Brydges, he said that he was very strongly of the opinion that prices would continue firm and rise in many localities for the next four or five years. That was not Brydges' opinion. In fact, he was writing the opposite to the London Secretary forecasting a serious collapse in the land market and the return of some of the land purchased to the Company.

While Brydges proved to be correct in his expectations about the fall of land prices, that was not his most serious problem in 1882. On 11 May of that year, Governor Colvile wrote a private letter to Brydges

informing him of allegations that a syndicate had made large profits from Winnipeg land sales. Colville said that the details were so indefinite that he could not ask him for an official explanation. He nevertheless warned Brydges to be most careful in "these stirring times".

The following month, the allegations began to take a more definite shape. Sandford Fleming, a member of the London Committee living in Canada, wrote to the Governor informing him of an interview he had had with Donald A. Smith where Smith alleged irregularities on the part of the Company officers in Winnipeg land sales. Fleming revealed that Smith had communicated the details of these transactions in a private letter to William Armit, the Company Secretary. When asked by the Governor to produce the letter Armit said he could not do so without cabling Smith for permission. As might have been expected, Smith refused to release the letter. Colville, in a letter dated 20 June, told Smith that the Committee had to protect its officers from accusations emanating from irresponsible sources, but it was equally its duty to investigate charges made by gentlemen like Smith. He informed Smith that the matter would be further discussed when Smith was in London for the General Court.

Before the General Court the affair continued to unfold. According to the records "various shareholders" called at Hudson's Bay House to comment on the sale of 56 lots at Fort Garry to a syndicate of some of the Company's officers who later sold 11 of those lots for almost the total purchase price. These Canadian shareholders refused to allow their names, or those of their informants, to be used, or to bring up the matter at the General Court. It is known, however, that one of these Canadian shareholders was Smith.

In the summer of 1882, after the London Committee had adjourned until October, a committee was set up to review Brydges' management. It had three members: Company Secretary William Armit; Deputy Governor Sir John Rose; and Sandford Fleming. Why three people to investigate Brydges' management? As Fleming had written to the Governor about the allegations and lived in Canada, the Governor thought it diplomatic and appropriate to ask him to report. Armit as we have seen, had been involved, and as there were no Committee meetings and little activity at Hudson's Bay House in July or August, it was practicable to send him. But Armit, like Fleming, was a friend of Smith, and Smith disliked Brydges. Therefore, to try to get a balanced report, Sir John Rose was also despatched to Canada.

It was indeed Rose's report that dealt in the most detail with the accusation against Brydges of speculating in land. In it, James A. Grahame is reported as stating that three-fourths of the 56 lots were purchased



Charles Brydges: "urbane, frank, open"

by Brydges, Sedley Blanchard, and John Balsillie, and one fourth by himself. On the other hand, Sedley Blanchard, the Company's solicitor in Winnipeg, told Rose and Smith that the property had been purchased by himself, Grahame and Balsillie. Brydges was not mentioned. Smith was adamant in stating that he believed Grahame's version and that as a shareholder he was not going to let the matter rest. Finally to prove that Brydges was not involved in any irregularities in selling land, Rose verified from cheques in the Bank of Montreal, Winnipeg, that the purchases had been as Blanchard had said. To press home this point in his official report Rose said:

It seems inexplicable how such a misconception should have arisen, but I am bound to state in the strongest terms that having heard the statement of all parties, and verified all the facts, there is not a shadow of ground for supposing that Brydges was, or ever intended to be interested directly or indirectly in the transaction. And I record this as my own unqualified conviction.

It would seem from this episode that Smith's only aim was to ruin Brydges professionally. He did not, for instance, criticize Brydges for not keeping a tighter rein on Balsillie, who worked in the Land Depart-

ment, a criticism which would have been justified.

In addition, neither Fleming nor Armit found Brydges guilty of speculating in Company lands. Rose put the whole matter in perspective in a letter to Sir John A. Macdonald in November 1882, writing that "we [presumably the London Committee] trace all these reports & complaints [on Brydges] to Donald Smith. He has evidently a great enmity towards him, & so has [George] Stephen from causes having their origins in past years." Rose further confirms that Brydges's main accuser was Smith. The old enmity that Rose referred to could have been the period in the 1870s when Brydges was Commissioner of the Intercolonial Railway and part of a syndicate also interested in building what was to become the Canadian Pacific Railway. As is well-known, George Stephen and Smith were first cousins and were both involved in the Canadian Pacific Railway.

If, however, Brydges thought that his name had been cleared, after the final reports of the three inspectors, he had clearly not taken the measure of Donald A. Smith, whom the *Dictionary of National Biography* describes as "resenting the success of other men's ideas", and of being "a good hater". At the General Court on 22 November 1883, Smith's harassment of the Land Commissioner moved a step further. Smith gave no intimation at the meeting that Brydges' management had been reviewed, that certain changes had been put in place, and that Brydges had been cleared of speculating in land. Instead Smith talked in general about "a want of confidence" in the Land Department. "The Canadian Pacific Railway Company had obtained 1,000,000 dollars for land, whereas this company had only obtained for a similar amount of land equally well situated 640,000 dollars." Finally, "he hoped that a thorough inquiry and investigation into all these matters would be made, and that they would be cleared up once and for all."

Rose came to Brydges' defence. In a stirring rebuttal which takes up more than thirty manuscript pages, Rose denied that Donald A. Smith had correctly interpreted the feeling of the people in Canada regarding the management of the Company. At the same meeting William Rose, son of Sir John Rose, said that the rumours and charges emanated "from the imagination" of Smith. The whole campaign arose, he added, because "Mr. Smith is at daggers drawn with Mr. Brydges, as is well known." When Smith challenged that statement, Governor Colville had to bring the meeting to order, asking Rose and Smith "to settle their differences somewhere else".

But more was still to come. Before the meeting was over Smith was to pull off a coup in the election of Committee members, as Company directors were called. Some Committee members had left the meeting before the votes were counted, confident that they were

re-elected. When the ballot box was opened, however, it was ascertained that Donald Smith had put in his own list for Committee members and that his 4,000 shares outnumbered those of 13 shareholders who had voted. Smith's list called for the election of himself and Mr. Charles Russell, Q.C. Russell was later described as "not a pleasant antagonist . . . neglectful of the small amenities which soften professional contests". The Committee consulted its solicitors who reported that Smith's nominations were invalid, as he had not followed the prescribed procedures. Nevertheless, to avoid a legal dispute the Governor and Committee negotiated with Smith. In the end two Committee members, J.P. Gassiot and Herman Hoskier, resigned, making way for Smith and Russell. Smith's actions were certainly unethical and probably illegal as he had not presented his list to the shareholders, but two of his great strengths were strategy and timing. He now had a seat on the London Com-

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C. J. BRYDGES,

Land Commissioner.

MONTREAL, CANADA, 1879.



HBC Land Office, Main Street, Winnipeg 1881.

mittee and was thus in a position to have an ever greater say in the Land Department.

Although Rose had not thought it politic to prevent Smith from taking over two seats on the Committee, he was still prepared to fight off Smith's relentless pursuit of Brydges. Rose, thinking he would not be able to attend the first meeting of the new Committee at which both Smith and Russell would be present, wrote a letter to the Governor with copies to Committee members, opposing Smith's demand for an investigation of the Land Department. In his letter dated 17 December 1883, one day before the meeting, he opened by saying:

As I fear I may be unable to attend tomorrow I must write what I should like to say on the first occasion when our new colleagues will be present.

He then went on to comment on the administration of the Company and particularly on the Land Department saying:

I wish to repeat emphatically what you and my colleagues will, I think, acknowledge has been my desire — that if any irregularity or misconduct has taken place, it should be rigidly inquired into, and that no matter whom it may affect — the Company should not retain in its service anyone in whose integrity,

reliance could not be placed. Mr. Brydges was not my nominee, as you well know, but his name having been suggested on Mr. Smith's resignation I gave my support to his appointment . . . and I believe the Company has found in him an exceptionally able officer . . . If there be fresh charges or, if the old ones have been imperfectly dealt with, it is due to the Board and Mr. Brydges that the accusation be put into a clear and explicit shape, to be communicated to Mr. Brydges for his reply, and that any evidence required should be taken by some competent and impartial gentlemen for the decision of the Board.

The minutes show that although Rose did attend the meeting there is no reference to his letter, although it is known from other sources that the contents were discussed.

Despite the previous investigations into Brydges' administration of the Land Department, and Sir John Rose's letter asking that Brydges be openly confronted with any remaining charge, Charles Russell on 15 and 22 January 1884 asked for another inquiry into the Land Department, and on the 29th the Committee approved the request under certain circumstances, one being that the new members substantiate their claims



Eden Colvile, HBC Governor, 1880 to 1889.

against Brydges. The investigation was dropped. Instead, a Sub-Committee for Canada was created by the London Committee on 1 May 1884. This Sub-Committee was authorized to "supervise the local affairs of the Company with such executive powers and authority as may from time to time be delegated to it by the Governor and Committee." The two Committee members appointed to the Sub-Committee were Donald A. Smith and Sandford Fleming. Brydges was told to send copies simultaneously of all his letters and documents to London and to the Sub-Committee in Montreal, to which he replied "I shall cordially carry out the instructions of the Board in this matter". Having brought Brydges to heel, however, Smith did not carry out the mandate of the Canadian Sub-Committee. Brydges reported on 24 September 1884 that "Mr. Smith passed through here on Saturday last, and expects to be back by the end of the week. I saw him for a few minutes". A week later, he again wrote that Smith had been "unable to give any time" to matters needing attention. "There are a number of cases which ought to be settled without delay, and injury is resulting from not closing them." In June 1885 in desperation Brydges cabled London saying that he had sent a letter

to the Sub-Committee six weeks previously but had yet heard nothing from them.

The Sub-Committee was an impracticable arrangement. Rarely were Fleming and Smith both in Montreal at the same time, and delays in decisions on land department business resulted in Brydges not being able to manage the department in an efficient and professional manner.

When Sir John Rose died suddenly in August 1888, Donald A. Smith's last firm opponent on the Committee was gone. While Governor Eden Colvile was not an admirer of Donald A. Smith, he was to retire in January 1889. As was characteristic of Smith, he moved quickly to take advantage of the situation. At the first meeting after the summer recess on 16 October 1888, there is a reference to the death of Right Honourable Sir John Rose, and an appreciation for the services he rendered to the Company during 15 years. One week later at a Committee meeting, it was moved by Sir Edward Hamilton, seconded by Sir Charles Russell and carried unanimously that Sir Donald A. Smith (he was knighted in 1886) be elected Deputy Governor in place of the late Sir John Rose, subject to the confirmation of the shareholders at the next General Meeting. At the annual General Court on 4 December 1888 Smith's election as Deputy Governor was confirmed. The one negative note came from John Gassiot, who had been a member of the Committee and who had resigned in 1883 when Smith's devious, but finely crafted scheme to obtain a place on the Committee had been carried out. "I am surprised at you, Mr. Colvile", he said, "in proposing Sir Donald Smith, after the manner he has behaved in regard to us". Before anyone could reply, Smith was on his feet with a self-righteous speech, containing a number of untruths:

Mr. Chairman this is, I think, the first time throughout a long life that any aspersion has been thrown upon me as a business man . . . I have been absolutely loyal to the interests of the Company. I have now been a director of the Company some 5 years. I think, had I so wished, that I could have obtained a seat at the board before. But I never desired it, although I am by far the largest shareholder.

No one at the meeting pointed out that Smith had waited until he was the largest individual shareholder before making what the Company solicitors described as "invalid" moves to gain a seat on the Committee.

Smith was now set to move in on Brydges for the final execution. One week after being officially elected Deputy Governor, the Committee approved a draft letter to Brydges which said in part:

. . . the Board have for some time past been considering the important question of the great expense attending the administration of the Company's

landed property and they have come to the conclusion that it must be considerably reduced. They will shortly advise you of the mode in which the reduction will be carried out and to what extent.

The letter signed by the Secretary was sent to Brydges on the very day that it was approved.

In his reply of 27 December, Brydges put forth a spirited defence of his Department, stating that he had saved \$6,000 a year by reducing the number of clerks by four, and that he had received nearly \$900,000 for forfeited instalments and interest on land that had remained in Company hands. But events were moving far more quickly than Brydges could have anticipated. The London Committee, with Smith present, met on 20 December and approved a draft of a letter dated 18 [sic] December addressed to Smith himself, part of which read:

[the Committee] consider that the remuneration of the Land Commissioner is altogether out of proportion to the business transacted and they have come to the conclusion that the time has arrived when the services of Mr. Brydges must be dispensed with . . . you are therefore authorized . . . to find a substitute . . .

Brydges was informed by letter dated 17 January 1889, the same day that Smith was elected Governor of the Company, that changes would be made in the Land Department which would affect his retention as Land Commissioner, and that the Committee would shortly address him further on the subject.

Once again, Brydges turned to Sir John A. Macdonald, the old ally of his backer, Sir John Rose, for assistance. In a letter of 5 February 1889 he said:

I have reason to fear that Sir Donald's feeling, which seemed to be in abeyance whilst Sir John Rose was alive, are not friendly but the reverse . . . Matters in my case are being made very unpleasant and it has every appearance of a desire to worry me out . . . my object in writing this letter is to ask you to do anything you can to avert what I believe is contemplated.

Sir John replied quickly and said he would get in touch with Sir Charles Tupper, High Commissioner for London, to see what could be done to preserve Brydges' position. It is doubtful that even the Prime Minister and Tupper could have averted Smith's firing of Brydges, but that we will never know, as Brydges died suddenly of a heart attack on 16 February while attending to some business at the Winnipeg General Hospital, one of his favourite charities.

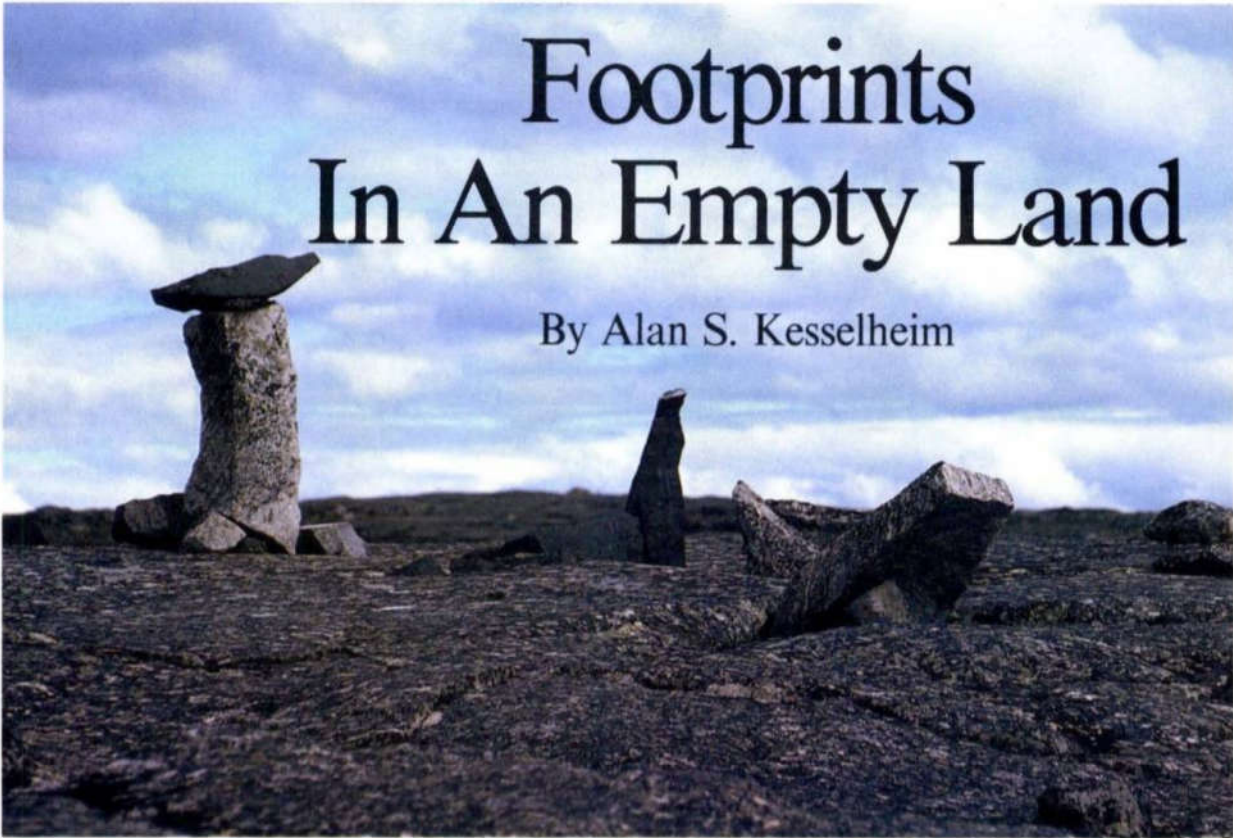
How can one sum up this epic decade? One can say that Brydges did not take direction easily, and with his imaginative, curious mind found it difficult not to meddle into affairs which were not in his jurisdiction.



Chief Commissioner James A. Grahame.

Yet he served the Company well and laid the foundation for a land department managed along modern lines. He correctly predicted shortly before his death that land affairs would continue to improve, a fact readily verified from the 1890 annual report. Brydges was a humane and fair man who spent considerable time and effort on religious and charitable causes trying to improve life in the City of Winnipeg. His fair-mindedness and his trusting and optimistic nature were, however, no match for Donald A. Smith who disregarded business and personal ethics to subjugate a man he resented, while also using him as a lynch-pin to further his quest for power. ♦

Shirlee Anne Smith is Keeper, Hudson's Bay Company Archives, Provincial Archives of Manitoba.



Footprints In An Empty Land

By Alan S. Kesselheim

All day long I felt an eerie awareness of the Caribou Inuit. It was another overcast, cold, and windy July day on the tundra. I was making an arduous canoe traverse from Carey Lake to Kamilukuak Lake, deep in the barrenlands of the Northwest Territories. My preoccupation with the Inuit was as much an exercise in distraction from the toil of portaging as anything prompted by archaeological evidence.

As I struggled across the rocky, sparsely vegetated landscape with my canoe and heavy packs, made a willow twig fire for tea at lunch, crossed the many interlaced caribou trails, and set up the evening camp on a low glaciated knob, I imagined the Inuit moving camp, preparing food, or studying the caribou sign for information.

It was as if I could perceive a distant linkage with the people who traditionally lived in the barrens and followed the sustaining herds of caribou. Not that I pretended to have anything in common with the Inuit, but that day, it seemed as if our spheres of existence merged, allowing me to appreciate the shadowy outlines of a simple, harsh, and ancient way of life in the North.

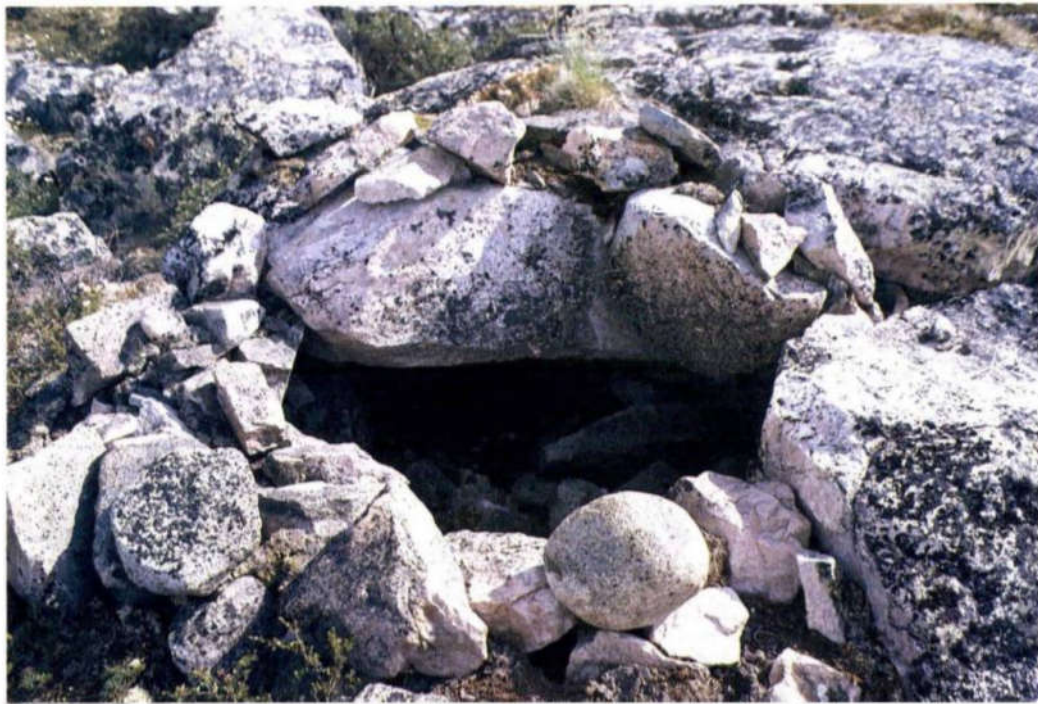
We were on our way from the Dubawnt River system to the Kazan River drainage. Baker Lake, Northwest

Territories, was the final destination for our canoe journey, a trip that had begun over a year earlier in Jasper, Alberta. Two of us had already paddled 1,500 miles and spent an isolated winter in northern Saskatchewan on our way to the barrenlands. During the second summer of travel, a pair of companions added another canoe to the expedition.

When we gained the Kazan River valley in mid-July, we were faced with some of the most formidable challenges of our journey. Boiling whitewater rapids, massive lakes, unremitting headwinds, and dismal weather taxed our skills and endurance. At the same time, we were increasingly entranced by the powerful beauty of the remote North, and were treated to some stupendous sightings of wildlife.

We grew more aware of the traditional Inuit culture as we encountered numerous sites used by Inuit in the past. The evidence of their occupation was all the more poignant because the entire barrenground wilderness is essentially deserted today.

The Kazan River flows north and east towards Hudson Bay, through the eastern half of the Northwest Territories. Rising in the boreal forest near 60° north latitude, it soon passes out of trees and into the true tundra of the Keewatin District. The lower river system, actually a string of large lakes connected by long



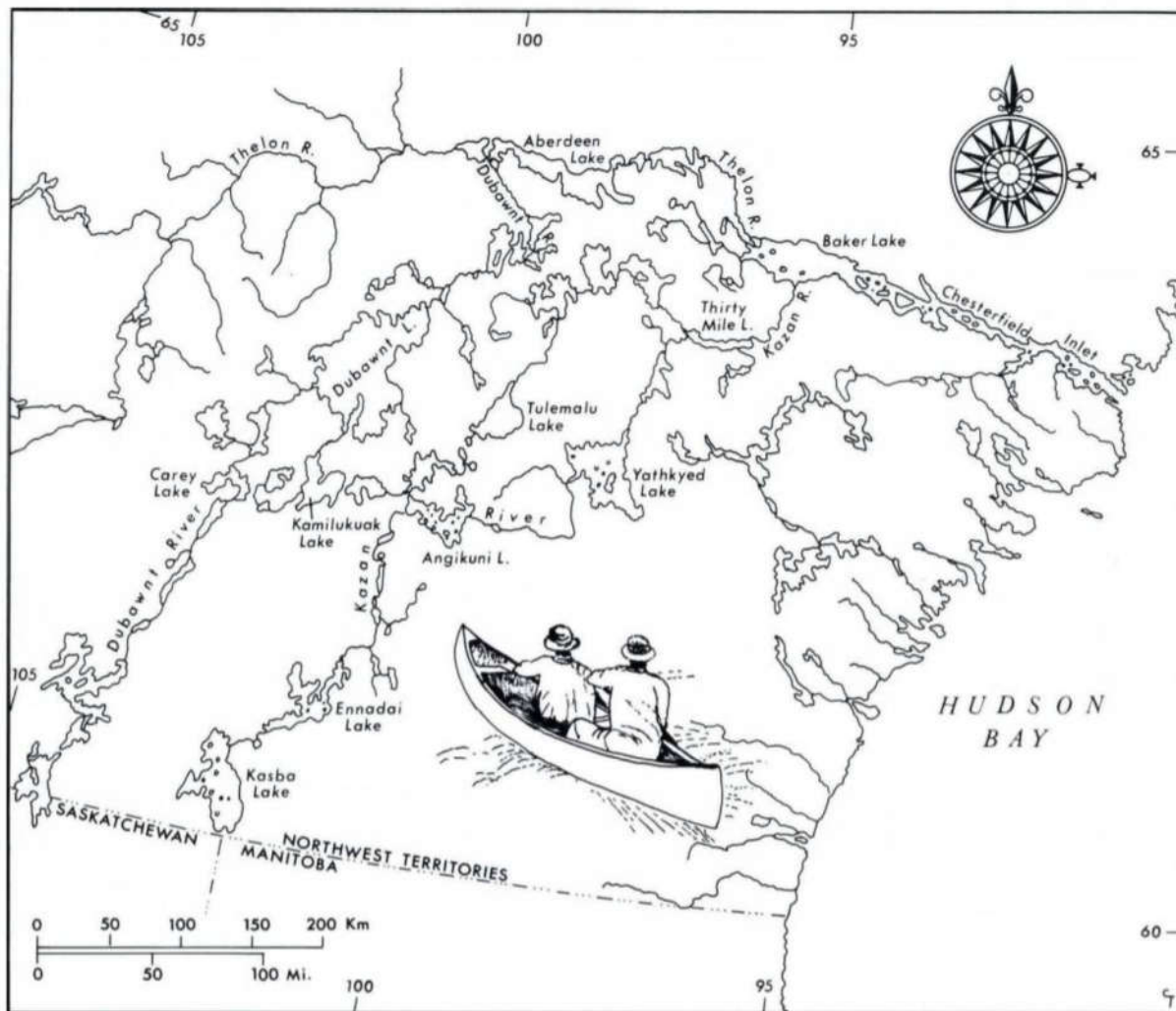
Marypat Zitzer photo

Inuit graves are simple structures made from rock. Human bones are frequently visible within the small enclosures.

Inukshuit marked overland trails, campsites and grave sites, lending an eerie presence to the spacious barren ground.



Alan S. Kesselheim photo



stretches of powerful current, courses through rolling bedrock country, sculpted and scoured by the heavy artistry of tremendous glaciers. An area devoid of trees and seemingly without landmarks, it is nonetheless an environment of subtle beauty and remarkable power. It was here, in this unforgiving setting, that a group of Caribou Inuit made their nomadic home.

The majority of traditional Inuit lived along the ocean coasts. Known collectively as the Thule Eskimos, they populated the Arctic as much as 1,000 years ago. Largely dependent on the sea for food, clothing, and other life-sustaining materials, these people only occasionally travelled inland. Over time, however, several groups of Inuit gradually adapted to an inland life, away from the northern seas. Whether this development was a reaction to overcrowding and competition, or simply a quirk of social evolution, remains a mystery.

By the seventeenth century, significant numbers of Inuit had moved inland, evolving an existence almost wholly predicated on the caribou. Huge caribou herds

provided these people with food, shelter, clothing, and bone tools. The Caribou Inuit lived nomadic lives, moving with the large migratory herds, and as long as the caribou were numerous and healthy, the life of the Inuit was a good one.

Several major subgroups of Caribou Inuit established themselves in distinct northern regions. The Inuit of the lower Kazan River became known as the Harvaqtormiut ("Where rapids abound") people. Originally attracted to the area by the many caribou water crossings, they took advantage of the region's dependable caribou herds, good fishing, and small groups of muskox to provide an often marginal, but adequate life. For generations, these people hunted the land, moved their camps, buried their dead, and lived in balance with the exiguous northern environment.

During the spring and fall caribou migrations, the Harvaqtormiut killed the animals that would provide food and shelter for the rest of the year. They lived in caribou skin tents, or tupers, in their summer camps,

moving overland when necessary. In the winter, they constructed igloos, and depended largely on cached meat from the fall hunt for their food.

Keewatin means north wind in the Cree language, and we found just how apt the appellation is as we paddled the region's lakes and rivers. Even with the help of solid current, we were sometimes stymied by strong headwinds. On lakes, large wind-driven waves created a very real danger of capsizing. The cold water, free of ice for only a few months each year, would have quickly sent us into hypothermic states if we had gone over. Rather than scheduling rest days into our itinerary, we took our breaks when winds precluded travel. Windbound days provided good opportunities to explore the countryside and investigate archaeological sites.

On Angikuni Lake, we were trapped on a small, barren island for two full days before the winds died enough for us to attempt a crossing. We left the island in the very early morning, hoping to beat strengthening winds and reach the continuation of the Kazan River. For eight miles we wallowed along the shoreline in frightening waves, spraydecks snapped to our boats to prevent water from swamping us. Paddling under the rocky, lichen-covered lakeshore, we were watched over by inukshuit (singular; inukshuk), startlingly human-like rock cairns erected by Inuit.

These structures served the Inuit as guideposts in otherwise featureless terrain, as well as campsite markers, stone fences set up in rows to funnel caribou towards a specific crossing, and general landmarks. Inukshuit, literally meaning, "Something resembling a person", seemed to watch us pass by, as if they had been left behind as mute sentinels. More than once, I was tricked into thinking that they were actual human profiles.

Inukshuit became more and more abundant in the lower Kazan valley, sometimes lining entire ridges or standing up on every island in a lake. Some were single rocks propped upright on a prominent location, others were elaborate and whimsical edifices. The inukshuit seemed to literally people the tundra, serving as brooding reminders of a culture recently gone from the land.

By the time we reached Yathkyed Lake, one of the most imposing bodies of water in the barrens, we had penetrated to the heart of the land used traditionally by Caribou Inuit. We had run and portaged some of the most difficult and scenic whitewater on the Kazan, paddling along an ice-scoured river channel. In the shaded valley, large snow and ice fields clung stubbornly to the steep banks, even in late July. The surrounding country, carpeted with a thick mantle of tundra vegetation, rolled off into a vast, seemingly endless wilderness.

In addition to the inukshuit, we began to find other artifacts left by the Inuit. Several times we selected campsites that had been used by native people. We

realized that our taste in camps coincided with that of the Inuit when we discovered old tent rings, circles of large stones used to weigh down the edges of caribou-skin summer tents. Our modern tents fit easily inside the stone circles, and the sense of cultural communion was particularly strong on the nights that we slept on the same ground once used by an Inuit family.

At the entrance to Yathkyed Lake, we found an old hunting site, marked by inukshuit, and complete with a well-preserved meat cache. Set on a prominent point of land, the cache resembled a small, rock-lined cave, floored with moss. When the meat from the major fall caribou hunt had been dried and prepared, any excess would have been stored in the cache and covered up with heavy rocks to keep animals from pillaging the precious food supply.

Once we had accustomed ourselves to the unnerving spaciousness of the barrenlands, a huge landscape strewn with erratic boulders left by retreating glaciers, we grew to appreciate the attraction the Inuit had to the northern environment. When we began to encounter wildlife, we understood how the land could have sustained and supported them as well.

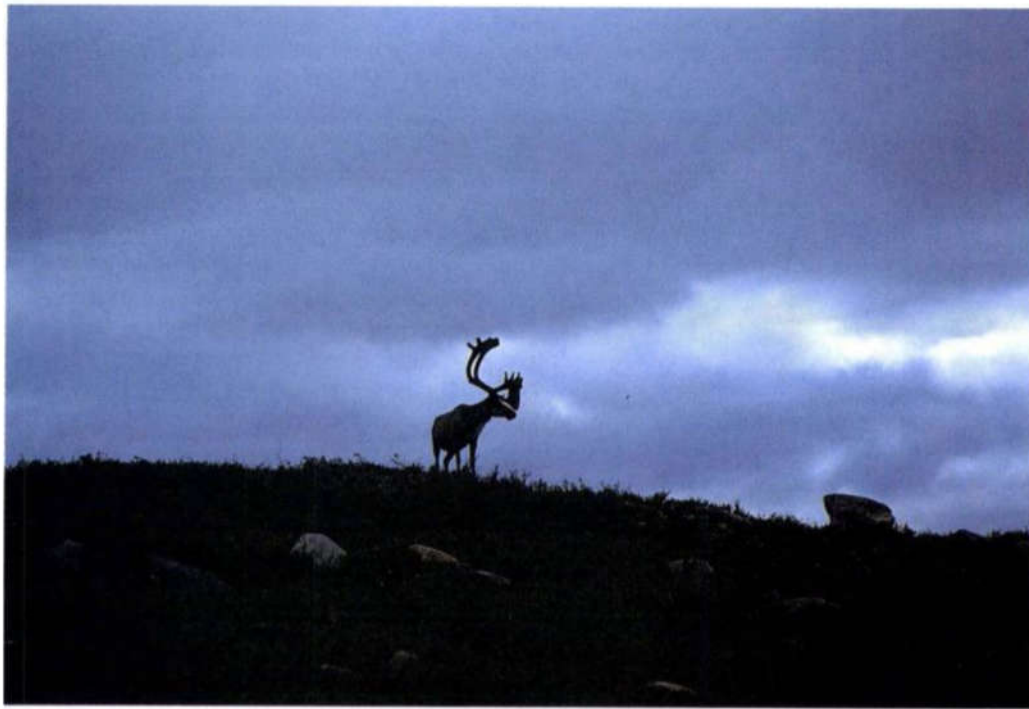
The first caribou we sighted were lone individuals, stragglers that were separated from the main herds. Known to the Inuit as tuktu, caribou are magnificent beasts, well adapted to life on the tundra. Leaving Yathkyed Lake on our way north, we came across larger concentrations of the northern deer.

Caribou summer in the remote arctic North, feeding on lichen and other tundra vegetation, and building up fat reserves to tide them over the strenuous winter. When fall weather begins, as early as August, restless herds begin to move south. Prior to the twentieth century the caribou wintered well south of the limit of trees, but their winter habitat has been steadily encroached upon by man. More recently, they have been forced to winter in a much more limited northern range.

During the fall migrations, when the animals are fat and in prime condition, the Inuit would hunt the tuktu and store meat for the long winter. Failure on the fall hunt meant a winter of hardship and starvation. To the Caribou Inuit, the yearly hunt was literally a matter of life and death.

Caribou are strong swimmers, undaunted by long lake crossings or swift river current. In many instances, they choose to swim across water rather than walk around it. Over the years, the Harvaqtormiut people discovered the lake narrows and river sections where the migrating herds would cross. It was here that they would hunt, either spearing swimming animals from kayaks, or hiding behind stone blinds and killing caribou as they emerged from the water.

To encourage caribou towards a specific crossing, native groups constructed parallel "fences" of inuk-



Marypat Zitzer photo

"The river of caribou passed all day long. . . ."



Marypat Zitzer photo



Maypat Zitser photo

Fortunate travellers may occasionally see muskox on the barren grounds.

shuit that acted to funnel the animals towards a desired spot. Several of these areas that we came across were littered with decayed caribou bones. Tent rings, meat caches, and occasional graves further identified the sites as favoured hunting grounds.

We never expected to see migrating caribou in large numbers. It had been a privilege to spot small groups of animals, several times at close range. When we camped next to a thundering rapid just upstream of Thirty Mile Lake, we discovered another nearby Inuit site, but saw none of the caribou that would have encouraged the natives to stay there.

Leaving my tent the next morning, I was stunned to find the far side of the river full of caribou, steadily moving to the south. Scanning the view through binoculars, I saw that the landscape was a panorama of moving caribou. We could see a sweep of tundra perhaps eight miles long and a mile wide. The entire corridor was full of animals.

In the excitement of seeing such an immense herd, we decided to spend the day in camp, watching the caribou pass and taking pictures of the spectacle. It was easy to imagine the lusty exuberance that would have infused an Inuit hunting camp.

The river of caribou passed all day long. The animals

varied in colour from chocolate brown to creamy white. All manner of specimens, from velvet-racked bulls in their prime, to lame and aged weaklings, moved across the trampled tundra. Calves followed cows, entire strings of magnificent bulls trotted along ridgelines, small subgroups stopped for a time to graze — caribou were everywhere.

By the following morning, the main herd had moved by and the migrating flow slowed to a thin trickle. Before breaking camp, we witnessed a harsh wildlife drama when a wolf scattered a small herd of grazing animals, separating and killing a calf after a short chase.

Herds such as the one that passed our camp were the lifeblood of the Harvaqtormiut. As the eighteenth century progressed, however, contact with white civilization inevitably altered the native lifestyle, inextricably tied to the caribou. White explorers and trappers introduced both the fur-trade economy and more efficient weapons. From that time, the Inuit way of life began a process of accelerating and inescapable change.

As early as the late 1700s, Inuit began trapping fox in the winter months and trading furs for money and goods, sometimes travelling as far south as Fort Prince

of Wales (Churchill, Manitoba) to do their business. Caribou were still the mainstay of Inuit life, but a tragic scenario became unavoidable by the end of the nineteenth century.

Increasingly concentrated human settlements, shrinking winter range, and more efficient weapons combined to dramatically reduce caribou herds. The Kaminuriak herd of the Kazan River valley reached a low of 40,000 animals by the mid-1900s. Massive migrating herds became less dependable. With such a staggering range to cover in search of small caribou herds, the Inuit became less able to count on sufficient fall hunts. In years when the trapping was poor or the market for fox was low, the Inuit experienced excruciating hardship.

Between 1930 and 1950, decimated caribou herds and uncertain fur trade brought starvation to the land. Sometimes years would go by between successful hunts. Settlements like Baker Lake became havens of last resort for the Harvaqtormiut, forced from the land by famine.

By 1960, the traditional way of life, tied directly to the land, was over for the Caribou Inuit. The wrenching transition to settlement life within a bureaucratic society was irrevocably established.

For us, Thirty Mile Lake provided the crescendo of our immersion into the ancient Inuit culture. Inukshuit, grave sites, and tent rings littered the shoreline. As I paddled, I sensed that I was trespassing on sacred, revered ground. At one particularly massive inukshuk, we landed our boats to investigate.

At first we found only a few overgrown tent rings and inukshuk markers. Further exploration revealed numerous, elongated rock piles which we thought might be grave sites. Our suspicion was confirmed when we stumbled upon an open grave, complete with the skeletal remains of a human being.

An unmistakable human skull, partially sunken in the ground and covered with gray lichen, stared vacantly past us towards the lake. Further searching yielded more graves, some with remains, that filled me with a haunting and profound sense of the past.

Here on the tundra lay what was left of human beings who had lived quiet, strenuous lives in an almost unbelievably harsh environment. What had they looked like? Did they starve to death or die of disease? Who buried them? Does anyone know who they were or what their cares had been in life? How many years had these bones lain exposed, bleached by the short, sunlit summers and weathered by the fierce, dark winters?

Leaving Thirty Mile Lake, we approached Kazan Falls, an impressive cascade and precipitous gorge where the river has cleaved through resistant bedrock to create a forbidding and awesome wilderness spectacle. We stayed there for a full day, camped in the

mist at the lip of the falls, and I was confronted with the fact that our long journey was nearly over. Memories of prehistoric-looking muskox, vast caribou herds, lonely stretches of sweeping tundra, and the eerie sight of human bones abandoned in a deserted landscape, filled me with a conflicted blend of emotion.

Three days out of Baker Lake settlement we encountered the first people we had seen in seven weeks. Groups of Inuit from Baker Lake were camped along the lower stretch of the Kazan River.

Their camps were markedly different from the traditional summer quarters of the Harvaqtormiut. Wall tents replaced skin tuperks, freight canoes with powerful outboard motors have made kayaks obsolete, and modern rifles make hunting immeasurably more efficient than in the days of spears and inukshuit fences.

The intent of the summer camps remains unchanged, however. Part of the Kaminuriak caribou herd, significantly restored in the last 30 years to approximately 70,000 animals, was rumored to be in the area. The Inuit were out hunting for winter meat.

In early August, we beached our canoes for the final time of the summer at the foot of the Baker Lake airport runway. For two of us, it was the end of a 416-day, 2,000 mile endeavour. We were almost instantly caught up in the quickening pace of modern society. All too suddenly, we were making phone calls, arranging transportation, and confronting a concentrated settlement of people.

Later on, while waiting to send our canoes south on a freight plane, we met an Inuit woman who works as an airport custodian. Dressed in an undistinctive polyester uniform, occupied with emptying ashtrays and sweeping floors, she presented an unassuming figure. When we asked her questions, she willingly interrupted her duties to talk with us in halting English.

We found that she had grown up as a Caribou Inuit, reared on the same land we had paddled through that summer. When she was sixteen, her family group had been forced to move to Baker Lake because of starvation. She has lived there ever since.

Perhaps it had been her relatives' bones we had discovered on Thirty Mile Lake. I wondered if we might have slept on the same ground, inside a tent ring, as her family once had in a summer camp. Suddenly, my transition from a year in the northern wilderness back to my home in civilization seemed paltry and insignificant when compared to the harsh and recent relocation of the Inuit from their life on the land. ♦

Alan S. Kesselheim of Bozeman, Montana, is a frequent traveller in the Canadian North and a frequent writer of articles on Northern subjects.

MANY stories are told of the idyllic conditions in the Red River Settlement in the middle of the last century. The settlers were supposed to live in rude comfort and in harmony. Whatever truth there may be as to this, certain it is that the serpent, in the form of a newspaper, entered into whatever Eden there was and started trouble. On 1 November 1859 two young newspaper men arrived with a printing plant from Toronto, and started the first paper in what was afterwards known as the Canadian Northwest. They were Englishmen, William Coldwell, 25 years of age, born in London; and William Buckingham, 27 years of age, born in Devonshire. Both were thoroughly competent reporters, with a considerable Toronto experience.

What moved these young men to come to the uttermost confines of civilization? Undoubtedly their appearance in the Red River settlement was the sequel to the newspaper campaign which had been carried on for eight years by the Toronto *Globe* in favour of the cancellation by the British Government of the Hudson's Bay Company's charter and the transfer of the territory of Rupert's Land to Canada. This campaign was inspired in the first place by A. K. Isbister, a native of this country, who had attained a position of considerable prominence in the educational and legal world of Great Britain. He suggested this policy to the redoubtable George Brown, "through a mutual friend," according to a statement by Brown, and it was steadily advocated, as I have indicated, by the Toronto *Globe*.

Coldwell and Buckingham thus came west with a policy ready made for them. They were the forerunners of what came to be known as the Canadian party. The paper they founded they called the *Nor'Wester*.

An interesting description of the arrival of the first newspaper in the territory known as Rupert's Land was given by William Coldwell, one of the founders, at a dinner of the Winnipeg Press Club on 2 April 1888. Mr. Coldwell described how the paper and much of the plant had been purchased in St. Paul and transported north over the old Crow Wing Trail by Red River cart, the carts being drawn by oxen. "We made," said Mr. Coldwell, "a very wild start indeed, as one team ran away at the outset and distributed some of the type in the streets." The journey from St. Paul to the Red River Settlement took over a month, or from 28 September to 1 November. "In our slow-going, sleepy travel we did not exceed 15 or 20 miles a day." There were in 1859 no houses on the present site of Winnipeg, except the great log villas of Andrew McDermott and Alexander Ross along the river bank; so the *Nor'Wester* was housed in a little shack, probably near the present corner of Water and Main streets.

"Here," said Mr. Coldwell, "we commenced publication on December 28, 1859, and at the outset were greater monopolists than we had any wish to be. We

were our own editors, reporters, compositors, pressmen, news boys, and general delivery agents, besides having to undertake a house-to-house canvass throughout the entire settlement. We secured a liberal subscription for our fortnightly newspaper — payment in advance. The subscription price was 12 shillings, afterwards reduced to 10 shillings per annum."

The *Nor'Wester* started right in as a paper in opposition to the existing order. They slung a pretty good pen in those days. The first number spoke of the interest of the Canadian government in the colonization of the vast country watered by the Red River, the Assiniboine and the Saskatchewan. "The country in the Northwest cannot remain unpeopled. The printing press will hasten the change," they declared. They denounced the discouragement of colonization by the authorities and asserted that the only possible future for the Red River Settlement and the territory to the west was union with Canada. The two pioneer newspaper men told the people of the Red River Settlement that they were "living in a miserable state of serfdom." What an assertion in view of the many statements which had been made as to the idyllic conditions of rude comfort under which the inhabitants lived. They declared that the Hudson's Bay Company was utterly unsuited to the times and absurd in form, and they spoke of the "settled conviction, right or wrong, in the people's mind that the Council of Assiniboia is a puppet in the hands of the Hudson's Bay Company."

A year of this strenuous journalism was enough for Buckingham. He retired and returned to the east, where he had a considerable subsequent career as publisher of the Stratford *Beacon* and as private secretary to

John Wesley Dafoe (1866-1944) was editor of the *Manitoba Free Press* (later the *Winnipeg Free Press*) from 1901 until his death. He gained his early newspaper experience on the *Montreal Star* and as the founding editor of the *Ottawa Journal* at the age of 19. He was a journalist for over 60 years and observed and commented on the activities of Canadian prime ministers from Macdonald to Mackenzie King. He was a member of the Rowell-Sirois Commission and a member of the Canadian delegation to the Paris Peace Conference in 1919.

His memoir of the early days of Western Canadian journalism was delivered as a lecture to members of the Manitoba Historical Society in 1930.

Alexander Mackenzie during his term as Prime Minister of Canada. He, jointly with Hon. G. W. Ross, became Mackenzie's biographer. He died in 1915.

Buckingham's successor on the *Nor'Wester* was James Ross, a native of the settlement and a graduate of Toronto University. Coldwell and he proceeded along the lines of the policy I have indicated. It was a policy that entailed serious sacrifices for the two intrepid pioneers. Mr. Ross was postmaster at the time he associated himself with Coldwell, but he was soon fired. He was also sheriff, and he lost that job too. Subscriptions to the paper were cancelled, and socially they were pretty well ostracized, being banned from the parties held by the elite. They were regarded as a pair of obstreperous agitators, and had the word been known at that time they would undoubtedly have been called Bolsheviks.

The files of this newspaper can be seen in the [Manitoba Archives] — its first number with the old-time journalistic motto: "Naught extenuate nor aught set down in malice," and later numbers describing the course of life in the settlement. Some files have verbatim reports of lectures and addresses by such famous Red River Settlement characters as Archdeacon Cochrane. Others have accounts of mishaps at buffalo hunts, such as the death of a hunter from a seared throat got by the explosion of powder while he was blowing down his gun barrel to clear it. The unique life of the Red River Settlement is mirrored in its files. One of the most notable reporting performances of the *Nor'Wester* was a verbatim report, in the best style of the divorce reports which until recently appeared in the London papers, of the notorious Corbett case, extremely spicy details of which were set forth for the edification of a community which was greatly scandalized thereby.

A.K. Isbister: A voice for Canada.



Manitoba Archives



William Coldwell: A serpent in Eden.

Coldwell left the paper and returned to the east in 1864, and at the same time James Ross was succeeded as editor by the famous Dr. John Christian Schultz, who advocated with even greater vigour the annexation of the country to Canada. With Schultz was associated Dr. Brown, who succeeded later to the editorship.

In order that one may realize something of the difficulties with which the *Nor'Wester* had to contend, it should be stated that, in addition to other groups, there was one strong American group in the Red River Settlement. There was a constant controversy as to the future of the settlement, the American group thinking that the only destiny of the country was annexation to the United States. This was scarcely to be wondered at, as the trade tracks of the country were chiefly to the south, 1,500 carts a year going to St. Paul. Schultz and Brown had a very stormy time. They were the principals in many stirring incidents. The authorities harassed them almost unceasingly. At one time they threw Schultz into jail, but he was liberated by the populace. There are also records of mobs visiting the newspaper office to instruct the editor how to conduct his paper.

Rev. Dr. George Bryce paid the following tribute to the *Nor'Wester*: "This paper by its advocacy of union with Canada gave publicity to the cause which was chiefly instrumental in bringing that dream to pass." And Professor Chester Martin, probably nearer the mark, states: "The vigour with which those in charge of the *Nor'Wester* conducted their campaign was probably very largely responsible for the troubles of 1869-

70, as it was the organ of what was known as the Canadian Party."

The *Nor'Wester* was an early casualty of the Red River uprising. When the trouble started the paper ceased to exist, because Louis Riel commandeered it. The last issue appeared on 24 November 1869.

At this moment the indefatigable Mr. Coldwell reappeared on the scene with a new lot of type and a printing press, prepared to start a paper which he proposed to call the *Red River Pioneer*. Riel bought the plant outright for 550 pounds sterling, and to get the money he looted the Hudson's Bay treasury and carried off the cash. Riel merged the two papers and called that which he issued the *New Nation*. This he put in charge of a young American, Major H. M. Robinson, who had some connection by marriage with a family at Fort Garry. Robinson was to run the paper in the interest of Riel, who wanted it to wield an influence in support of the provisional government of which he was "President." Robinson, however, thought his chief job was to get on with the business of annexing the country to the United States. He wrote articles entitled "Consolidation," "The Future of the American Continent," and "One Flag, One Empire" — a phrase I have often heard used in another sense. Another was entitled "Annexation is Our Manifest Destiny." Riel after four months decided that was not a judicious line of stuff to put out and he put Major Robinson in an institution that was the equivalent of the modern "hoosegow." He then turned the paper over to Thomas Spence, a man who had come to the Red River four or five years earlier, an Irishman who was said to be a friend of D'Arcy McGee. Thomas Spence has a niche of fame in the history of this country, because he was the man who established the Republic at Portage la Prairie. The *New Nation* came to an end in August 1870. In its final issue there was an editorial complimentary to Col. Garnet Wolseley who was then nearing the fort with his troops.

Robert Cunningham, a representative of the *Toronto Globe*, who came in with the troops, joined forces with Coldwell and they started a new paper called the *Manitoban* in November 1870. It was the first of a flock of weeklies. If you want to start a paper nowadays [1930] you can do it with \$500,000 or \$1,000,000; but those were the days when political papers could be established given a handful of type, a printer and a "slashing" writer. The *Manitoban* inaugurated the era of the small political paper. It appeared as the organ of the government party, which embraced the "old timers" or settlers and supported the Clark Administration. Then the Canadian Party published a paper called the *News Letter*, which was a very lively sheet. Still another was started, the *Manitoba Liberal*, conducted by Stewart Mulvey who, as an Irishman, was



Alexander Begg: Historian of the early days.

"agin the government." There was also a French paper, the *Metis*, which was edited by Joseph Royal.

In 1871 a notable journalistic event occurred in the Red River Settlement. A group of American newspaper men took a trip to the West and penetrated to the Settlement. Included in the party were Charles A. Dana, famous editor of the *New York Sun*, and Bayard Taylor, noted American poet. Telegraphic news made its first appearance in this year. Alexander Begg, the historian of the early days, began in 1872 the publication of the *Manitoba Trade Review*.

The year 1872 was an unfortunate one for the newspapers in the Red River Settlement. Dominion elections were held in that year. It appears that someone monkeyed with the voters' lists, which was a popular political pastime in those days. The elections were held on a list that was two years old. The result was that many "Canadians" could not vote. They could wreck the newspaper offices, however, and they wrecked them all so thoroughly, with the exception of the *Manitoba Liberal*, that it took them months to get going again.

During this interregnum the *Free Press* decided it was an opportune time to be born; and though many other papers have come and gone since, it has refused to die. The *Free Press* was formed under a happy combination of circumstances. There was a young man who wanted to start a newspaper and another young man who had the money with which it could be started. The former was William Fisher Luxton, teacher of the only school in Winnipeg, who had gained newspaper experience in Goderich and Seaforth, Ontario. The other young man was John A. Kenny, who had just arrived in the settlement from Ontario with \$4,000. The *Free Press* got off to a flying start and perhaps to that fact its long life can be attributed.

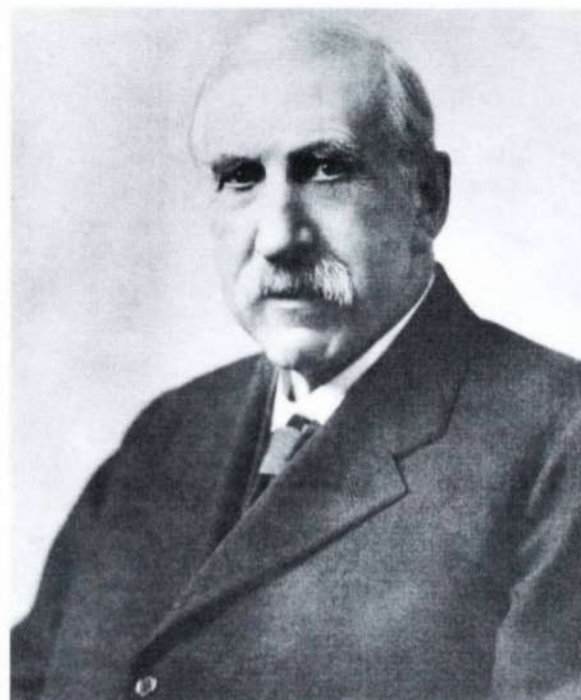
This much has to be said for the *Free Press*, that it is the only survivor of a large family of newspapers which appeared during the eighteen-seventies, many of which were born only to die. One, the *Daily Herald*, edited by Mr. Fonseca, lasted two weeks. It was revived later by Walter R. Nursey, but expired after the lapse of two months. One of the papers which was born and had a brief life was the *Standard*, founded and edited by Molyneux St. John. There is a fine name for an editor! St. John was the junior member of a noble English family and had been an officer in the British army. He came to this country as a newspaper correspondent with the Wolseley expedition and remained for some years. Twenty years later he returned to the province and was for a brief period editor of the *Free Press*. At a later period he was, until his death, Usher of the Black Rod in the Federal House at Ottawa.

There was considerable excitement in conducting newspapers in the Red River Settlement in the seventies. Here is a sample: Contempt of court proceedings against Mr. Luxton were taken. Mr. Luxton had disagreed violently with the chief justice of the province as to the manner in which he conducted his court. Brought before the angry chief justice he was fined \$500. Immediately sixty-four men in the court room put their hands in their pockets and produced the money. There is a signed list, in the files of the *Free Press*, of the worthies who paid the fine.

The *Free Press* started as a weekly in 1872. In 1874 it came out as an evening daily. Later, opposition dailies began to appear. The *Nor' Wester* and the *Daily Herald* did not last long. The *Daily Tribune* was started by George H. Ham in 1878 but its career was brief and troubled. In 1880 the *Daily Times* came out in opposition to the *Free Press*, and from that time, I regret to say, there has been competition with the *Free Press*, except for one blessed period when we were monarchs over the whole scene for four or five weeks.

A complete list of the newspapers published in Winnipeg between 1859 and 1885 was given by William Coldwell in connection with his address to the Winnipeg Press Club in 1888. Mr. Coldwell said:

"The record of newspapers from the start runs thus: 1859-70, the *Nor' Wester* published in succession by William Coldwell, Dr. John Schultz, and Dr. Brown; 1870, the *New Nation*, published by Major H. M. Robinson; 1870, the *Manitoban*, Cunningham and Coldwell; 1870, the *News Letter*, by P. G. Laurie; 1871 the *Manitoba Liberal*, by Stewart Mulvey; 1872, *Manitoba Trade Review*, by Alexander Begg; 1872, *Manitoba Gazette*, G. F. Carruthers; 1872, *Manitoba Free Press*, Kenny and Luxton; 1873, *Nor' Wester*, E. L. Barber; 1874, the *Standard*, Molyneux St. John; 1877, *Manitoba Daily Herald*, Messrs. Begg and Walter R. Nursey; 1878, *Manitoba Telegraph*, Mr. Nursey; 1878, *Quiz*, Geo. H. Kerr; 1878, the *Gazette*, Hon. H.



George H. Ham: Set the town rocking with laughter.

Manitoba Archives

J. Clarke; 1879, *Winnipeg Daily Times*, C. R. Tuttle; 1879, *Tribune*, George H. Ham; 1880, *Daily Times*, Amos Rowe; 1881, the *News*; 1882, the *Daily Sun*, W. Naegle; 1883, the *New Sun*. All of these," said Mr. Coldwell, "excepting the last two, the *Free Press* and *Sun* (which was a year or so later absorbed by the *Free Press*) have passed into the happy land where sheriffs are unknown!" Of Mr. Coldwell, it is to be noted that illness forced his retirement from the *Free Press* staff in the early 1880s. He moved to the coast and died there in 1907.

George H. Ham came to the Red River in the winter of 1874, from Port Hope. He was a member of the *Free Press* staff, first as printer and then as writer. He started the *Tribune* in 1879, which, as Mr. Ham in his characteristic way said, "he contributed to the list of busted newspapers." Mr. Ham has left a good description of journalistic activities in Winnipeg in the seventies:

One great hardship was the frequent failure, through climatic conditions, of the telegraphic service, which came from Montreal, and from Ottawa, via St. Paul. It didn't take much of a storm to put the service out of business, but everybody sympathized with the paper's announcement that the telegraph lines were down and no despatches had been received, and blamed the telegraph company instead of the paper for the lack of news. Three cents a word was charged for press despatches and as the Canadian despatches

had to be repeated at Buffalo and St. Paul, Sanskrit was easier to decipher than some of them when they finally reached Winnipeg.

In those early days no one could realize the troubles of a reporter's routine unless he experienced them. Sometimes, when the telegraph service was out of commission, no mails for three or four days, the thermometer 40 degrees below zero, and not a blessed thing doing, the situation was appalling. But the paper had to be issued, and Jack Cameron (the city editor) was a wonder, and what he didn't conjure up wasn't worth conjuring. But pleasant memories linger of those earlier days, kindly companions and congenial work . . . and I can look back with pleasure that I was amongst those pressmen in the happy days when everybody knew everybody else in Winnipeg, or knew who they were, and the little frontier outpost had a glorious pioneer glamour which, alas, has passed away forever.

The "Jack Cameron" to whom reference has been made by Mr. Ham was the first news editor of the *Free Press*. John R. Cameron came to the settlement with the troops as a sergeant. A printer named Griffin helped him to get out the first issue of the *Free Press*. Cameron achieved considerable celebrity in the community through a column which he conducted under the heading, "Noremac's Nonsense." Quite a romantic story is told about him. Apparently smitten right away by the charms of a lovely young lady whom he noticed, Cameron was as suddenly overcome by religious emotion, and with enraptured voice he remarked to a companion: "I want to go to that young lady's church." He went to church faithfully and he subsequently married the fair object of his affection, though history does not record whether his church attendance record following the nuptials was as exemplary as it was previously. Cameron afterwards returned to Hamilton, the city from which he had come west, and made a reputation for himself as an editor and a humourist.

A note might perhaps be here made of the subsequent career of George Ham. Ostensibly, during the eighties, he was a registrar under the old system of Land Titles, but actually he was engaged in journalism, a good deal of the time, with a deputy in charge of his office. When his office disappeared owing to economies practised by the Greenway government, he joined the *Free Press* staff. He amused himself by pretending to be a green reporter; and the naive comments of the "new reporter" on things in general soon set the town rocking with laughter. He remained with the *Free Press* for two or three years until the CPR saw in him the makings of a useful publicity man, and his subsequent career was with that railway. He was a man of extraordinary charm and humour, with a marvellous capacity for clever, instinctive impromptu

and repartee. A story is told of how he was rushed to an emergency hospital for an operation for appendicitis. He told the surgeon as he was going under the ether: "Well, doctor, you can take my appendix but please leave me my table of contents." Once he made some kind of a "bonehead" play in the handling of a newspaper article, and when taken to task for it he replied: "Well, I may not be broad-minded, but I am certainly thick-headed!" These are just samples of the sparkling, bubbling wit which made George H. Ham a most cherished companion. Many of his best stories are to be found in the book which he left behind, *Tales of a Raconteur*.

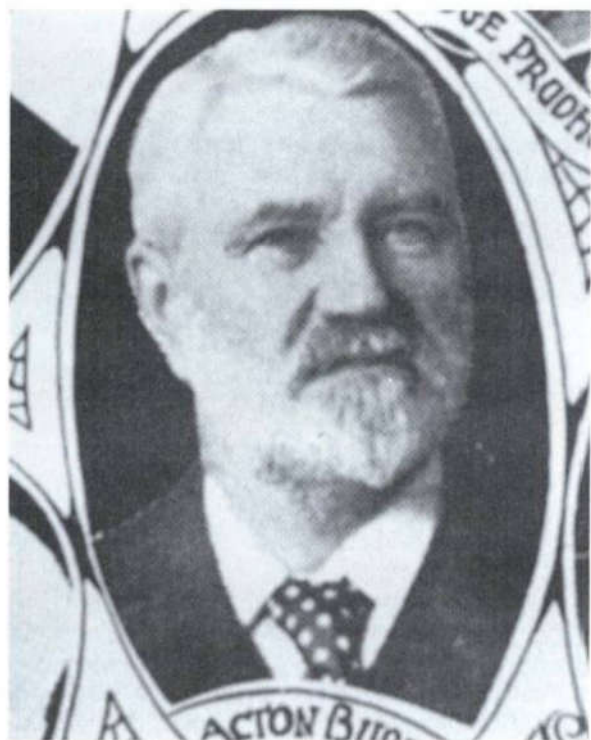
With the arrival of the railway and the coming of the eighties, Winnipeg got into the throes of the great boom. The newspapers had a brief period of glory and prosperity. The *Free Press* went from the evening field to the morning field in 1881, and that left the evening field to the *Times*, which was then under the control of Amos Rowe, who acquainted his journalistic training in an auction room in Ottawa. Those were the days when the air rang with the talk about the crossing at "Grand Valley" and about "Nelsonville, the banner town of Southern Manitoba." Then in April, 1882, the newspapers announced "Edmonton, Edmonton, at last", whereupon the boom blew up.

At that time Winnipeg appeared to be the Mecca of many of the liveliest newspaper men of Canada. They flocked in and after a short stay a good many went

William Luxton: A slashing journalistic style.



Manitoba Archives



Acton Burrows: A Conservative voice.

out; some stayed, perhaps because they hadn't the price of a ticket. Among them were Albert Horton, afterwards editor of the Senate Hansard; A. C. Campbell, afterwards editor of the House of Commons Hansard; J. P. Robertson, afterwards Manitoba provincial librarian; R. K. Kerrighan, "The Khan;" and, most notable of all, Ed. Farrer, who for a short time was editor of the *Times*. In many ways Farrer was the most remarkable journalist that Canada had ever seen. He belonged to a noted Irish family and was closely connected with dignitaries of the Roman Catholic Church. He was a student at the Jesuit college in Rome, but one day he walked out of the college, left the life of seclusion, study and prayer behind him and became an adventurous journalist in Canada. He was a man of extraordinary talent as a controversialist. It was a matter of record that he had written campaign literature for both parties at the Dominion elections in 1882. It was reported that he was once seen wandering about in the early dawn and that he explained that he had been up all night trying to figure out how he could answer his own case for the other side.

Mr. Rowe had a good deal of trouble with Mr. Farrer. One amusing story is told of an encounter which Mr. Rowe had with him. Mr. Rowe, who was a dignitary of the Orange Order, went on a lecture tour in support of it, and while he was away Farrer wrote an article criticizing the order. This distressed Mr. Rowe very much. On his return he expostulated with Mr.

Farrer, saying people must be wondering why it was he spoke of the order in one way and wrote of it in another.

"Don't worry, Amos," was the consoling reply of Mr. Farrer, "no one will ever accuse you of writing that article!"

There were two or three papers in succession known as the *Sun*. About 1883 the position of editor was taken by T. H. Preston, a young newspaperman of Toronto, who some years later returned east and became owner of the *Brantford Expositor*, entering upon a career as a public man, and having an opportunity which he declined — of being leader of the Liberal party in Ontario.

The *Free Press* had a succession of notable editorial writers. One of them was W. E. MacLellan, who came from Nova Scotia to practise law but soon gave it up for newspaper work. He was a very vigorous writer of the old, slashing-style type. He was induced to leave the *Free Press* and go over to a new Conservative evening paper, the *Manitoban*, which was being founded by Acton Burrows. Mr. MacLellan, for a short time before he made his shift, wrote the editorials for both papers, which was comparatively easy since he would write an article for one paper and then write a scathing reply to it in the other. It worked very well, but he once narrowly escaped having a mishap. Having written a powerful leader for the *Free Press*, the morning paper, he wrote a telling reply to it and before going home for the night delivered it at the *Manitoban*, the office next door. It was not until noon the next day that he discovered to his horror that the first article had been thrown out of the *Free Press* by Mr. Luxton, who had rejected it upon seeing the proof. Mr. MacLellan, so the story goes, grabbed his hat and rushed over to the *Manitoban* office to have the scathing reply to the article which never appeared taken out of the evening issue of the *Manitoban*. Newspapers in those days consisted of only four pages, and they were printed on a flat press, two pages at a time. The edition had been half printed; as it contained the crushing rejoinder it was necessary to consign the whole of it to the furnace, which was a serious matter in those hard times.

The breaking out of the North West Rebellion of 1885 provided an exciting time for the newspapers. The *Sun*, the *Times*, and the *Free Press* were put on their mettle and there was extreme rivalry between them. The *Free Press* rather objected to what it regarded as the abhorrent sensationalism of its contemporaries, and made a celebrated declaration of news policy with a view to putting its more volatile rivals to shame. The high-water mark of this declaration was in these terms:

Whether the campaign be of long or short duration, exertions will be made to give the readers of the

Free Press exactly what the public wants and have a right to expect from any newspaper worthy of the name — reports of actual occurrences as soon as possible, as distinct from the mischievous imaginings of “war correspondents” located in the home office. During the campaign the regular issues of the *Free Press* can be confidently relied upon for all that has transpired. When anything happens, it will be reported. When nothing happens, nothing will be reported.

I came to Winnipeg in May 1886 and joined the reporting staff of the *Free Press*. There were at that time four newspapers in Winnipeg: the *Free Press*, a morning paper; the *Manitoban*, already referred to; the *Sun*, and a small paper called the *News*, edited by W. T. Thompson, who was later managing editor of the *Duluth Herald*.

The *Free Press* news staff at that time consisted of Walter Payne, T. E. Morden and myself. Mr. Morden, who was a reporter on the *Free Press* for well over thirty years, had an extraordinary reputation as an accurate reporter. In controversies in the legislature as to the accuracy of reports, it was always conclusive if it could be asserted that the report was by Mr. Morden. No one ever challenged either his integrity or his accuracy. He was a man absolutely without guile, except in one respect. If when late at night space became contracted and he was told to put the balance of his “copy” in four more pages, he would, in his desire to give everybody a fair show, write so fine a hand that he would get as much in these four pages as he ordinarily put into a dozen!

I was city editor of the *Free Press*; the city editor of the rival *Manitoban* was C. W. Handscomb. I was John Wesley; he was Charles Wesley. He was just one day my senior, which justified us in having a joint two-day birthday celebration every year. For these and other reasons there was between us close friendship and brisk rivalry. Charlie carried his singing and acting talents to the American stage for a time, but came back to Winnipeg and to journalism and at the time of his death in 1906 was dramatic editor of the *Free Press*.

The leading reporter of the *Sun* was R. L. Richardson, who afterwards had a somewhat remarkable journalistic and political career.

The *Free Press*, in 1888, gobbled up the *Morning Call*, into which the *Evening Manitoban* had been turned. Later it absorbed the *Sun*, and for five weeks it was monarch of all it surveyed. The *Tribune*, founded by R. L. Richardson, then made its appearance and we had a competitor which was to prove permanent. For some years there was a very vigorous political duel between the *Free Press* and the Greenway government, which was supported by the *Tribune*. A gentleman who was active in politics at the time has often told me a



John W. Dafoe, 1884.

Collection of Christopher Dafoe

sad story of his experience with the two newspapers. As a supporter of the Greenway government he was instructed to extirpate the *Free Press* in his constituency and get all the people to take the *Tribune*. Just as he succeeded in doing this, at a very considerable cost, there was a shift in the newspaper scene in Winnipeg. The *Free Press*, owing to a change in ownership, resumed its pristine faith in Liberalism and became an ardent supporter of the Greenway government, while the *Tribune* began to see serious faults in the administration which it formerly adored, whereupon the unfortunate politician had to do his work in his constituency all over again in reverse.

By this time Mr. Luxton had ceased to be connected with the *Free Press*. By purchasing rival newspapers he had brought new interests into the partnership which he could not control, with the unfortunate consequence that about 1893, owing to differences as to policy, he ceased to be editor of the paper. He thereafter founded a paper, reviving the old title, *Nor' Wester*, and for a short time conducted it.

This is an opportune moment to say something about Mr. Luxton. He had his defects like everybody else, but he was one of the finest men I ever knew. He had certain journalistic principles which he strongly held

and which he impressed upon the journal which he founded — traditions which are still operative and which have not had a little to do with whatever success the *Free Press* has achieved.

After his retirement from the *Free Press* and his unsuccessful venture with the *Nor' Wester*, he had a brief period of newspaper experience in St. Paul. He edited the *St. Paul Globe*, a paper now extinct, a position which it is understood he owed to his old time friendship with J. J. ("Jim") Hill. But Mr. Luxton came back to Manitoba. He took over a position in the public service, and died a good many years ago. His name will always be honourably associated with the history of journalism in Canada.

Associated with Mr. Luxton on the *Free Press* and afterwards on the *Nor' Wester* was an editorial writer of exceptional ability, D. J. Beaton, "Black Dan", as he was popularly called. I found myself fascinated by his extraordinary style of composing editorials. He wrote on soft copy paper with the hardest pencil he could find. His caligraphy was extraordinarily minute and no one ever saw any interlineations or changes in his copy. He would sit at his desk motionless for long periods of time until a sentence was formed letter perfect in his mind. Thereupon he would write it down. His day's work would be represented by three or four pages, but on these pages there was a complete editorial page.

After an absence of some years I came back to Winnipeg in September 1901 to take the editorship of the *Free Press*. At that time the newspapers in Winnipeg were: the *Free Press*, morning and evening, with E. H. Macklin in charge; the *Tribune*, with R. L. Richardson as owner and editor; and the *Telegram*, into which the *Nor' Wester*, by a series of changes, had evolved. It was an evening paper, but shortly afterwards it put out a morning edition. One of the happy consequences of the establishment of the *Telegram* was that it gave to Winnipeg one of its most valued citizens in the person of Mr. W. Sanford Evans.

Mr. Richardson divided his attention between journalism and politics. He was elected to the Dominion parliament in 1896, and thereafter, with the sole exception of the general election of 1911, he contested a constituency at every Dominion election. In addition, he fought two by-elections, all of them, after 1901, unsuccessfully until 1917 when he became Unionist member for Springfield. Mr. Richardson had a considerable gift of humour and his special contributions to his paper, embodied in the reflections and observations of "The Major", gave a good deal of amusement to his readers for a long period. He was also a very effective platform speaker.

Mr. Evans retired from the *Telegram* and newspaper life about 1905, and his place was taken by Mr. M. E. Nichols, who after some years of service entered

into newspaper ventures in Montreal, but finally returned to Winnipeg to take charge of the *Tribune* under its changed ownership.

It seems incredible when it is recalled that up to 1907 the newspapers of Canada bought their telegraph service from the telegraph companies, one of which, at least, was an auxiliary of a railway corporation. The impropriety of having such a service and its inadequacy were felt keenly by the Winnipeg newspapers and in the summer of 1907, finding something at last on which they could agree, they met together; Mr. Macklin and I for the *Free Press*; Mr. Nichols for the *Telegram*; and Mr. Richardson for the *Tribune*. We made a solemn vow that for better or worse, we would have our own news service, obtained from sources open to us. I remember going first to Chicago and then to New York to arrange for such an independent news service as could be obtained at that time. The result was the formation of the Western Associated Press, which began in Winnipeg and spread throughout the West. Within five years co-operative news gathering came into effect throughout Canada. As the outcome of the movement which started in Winnipeg, the Canadian Press came into existence. The Canadian Press now includes in its membership every considerable daily newspaper in Canada. ♦

W.F. Luxton, the co-founder of the Manitoba Free Press, was a master of the "slashing" style of writing mentioned by J.W. Dafoe in his memoir of the early days of western journalism.

An example of the Luxton style at its most vigorous can be found in a letter he wrote to an official of the Free Press in 1897 in response to a proposal that Luxton rejoin the paper he had founded and which had passed into the control of Sir William van Horne and the CPR some years earlier. Luxton had no mercy on his former colleague, J.B. Somerset, general manager of the Free Press. Luxton's letter is reproduced on the opposite page. It retains its ginger after ninety years.

Sir— In accordance with my promise I herewith submit my response to the proposition you communicated to me at the meeting between us, arranged at your request, at Mr. Macdonald's office on Thursday evening last.

The proposition was that I should become attached to the Free Press staff at a salary of thirty dollars (\$30) per week with the prospect of increase in the contingency of the business improving to warrant it; my responsibility to be nil and my duties practically the same — to be only such as were self-imposed; in a word I was to have a sinecure, be the recipient of an income for doing nothing.

In the first instance you told me that the proposition was the outcome of good-will; whose good-will you did not say. At a later juncture you asserted that it had come from spontaneous action on your part.

I venture to observe that there may be good-will somewhere in the premises; but I could not refrain from questioning it were I to accept as accurate your statement that it was also the outcome of spontaneous action on your part. However, I do not accept that as accurate. So much for that.

I may frankly admit that an income of thirty dollars a week would mean to me a transition to comparative comfort from very uncomfortable poverty, from which my family and myself have been more or less suffering for some years, indeed nearly all the time since I was ejected from the Free Press almost without a dollar, leaving behind me what was, measured by dollars alone, worth to me several times over the sum mentioned, and what would have been, ere this, worth at least ten times that sum; all of which was fairly my own, fairly earned by twenty years of devotion and hard work. Moreover, the income you mention is one that I should, as things are, consider myself fortunate in receiving for any service or position that I could properly, honorably and with self-respect perform or occupy. But the connection you propose could not be made with these conditions fulfilled. Quite otherwise.

Having regard to all the facts and circumstances not ten times the salary named or any sum whatever would be sufficient inducement to even tempt me for a moment to accept the proposition. There are things that I esteem more than money; and there are things that I abhor more than the direst poverty. Manliness I adore; poltroonery I detest. To accept the proposition you make would be to declare myself a poltroon indeed. You well know I was despoiled of my all when ejected from the Free Press because I would (and quite within my rights) persist in what I deemed "Right" public policy — admitted by you to me at the time to be "Right." Think you to induce me to seek shelter from my present troubles by an action so contemptible that it would properly sink me beneath the scorn of all men worthy to be called men? Think you that I am such a "thing" that I would

be voluntarily even associated with, not to say subordinated to you, even to escape the misery my family and myself are enduring, in the light of your base ingratitude, black-hearted treachery and cunning duplicity to me in the past? To be associated with you, forsooth; you, whose friend and benefactor I had always been, and who requited me by using the very opportunities my beneficent treatment of you afforded and taking advantage of the full trust you knew I reposed in you, to conspire, to intrigue against, to usurp, aye, to rob me and throw me into the street all but penniless; and not even stopping at that but exerting yourself to prevent my regaining a sufficient foothold to start again to earn a living for myself and family! Contrast your treatment of me, with that I had always accorded you! You, in outward form a man, with the heart of a beast and the blood of a snake, and whose soul is in your purse; you monster, think you that the pressure of any possible adversity could force me into an association with you which to the world is to appear amicable?

It is of your nature to be perfidious. For the time being you are the most obsequious to those whom you believe to be potential; but of genuine loyal spirit you are not possessed of a spark. I have no hesitation in charging that all the zeal you have affected for those you represent on the Free Press board has been but a pretense. I could, were there any object in doing so, point to facts and circumstances overwhelmingly convincing that your perfidious conduct towards me and your apparent loyalty to others were all practiced for the sole purpose of self-benefit. There was a "syndicate" of you whose scheme was to get the Free Press. The relations between Sir William van Horne and myself became somewhat strained (which is another story) and while you were professing to be my friend in the premises, your syndicate, having the facilities within itself, was pouring poison against me into his ear with some effect. When this scheming was going on the Free Press was doing handsomely from a business stand-point; but you, misguided man, failed to appreciate why. You have learned something since; for instance, that the Free Press will not make money under present auspices and your direction. And with that discovery your syndicate's ambition for ownership ceased to exist, you preferring to receive a good salary and for others to retain the proprietorship and foot the losses. I cannot help thinking that Sir William will yet get, if he has not already got, your true measure, as I have done, and without the appalling cost to him it was to me to do so.

The proposition, which is the prime subject of this letter is declined.

Yours truly,
W. F. Luxton.

Winnipeg, 7 August 1897.

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Pacific Passages

With Lapérouse To Botany Bay

BY ALIX O'GRADY

For almost three years now bi-centennial celebrations have been under way in France, Australia, New Caledonia and at other places in the South Pacific, commemorating the fateful expedition in 1785-1788 undertaken by Jean François de Galaup, Comte de Lapérouse.

A select group of international scholars, scientists, historians, government officials and even a number of Immortals from the Académie Française, have been participating in a variety of events honouring the French explorer who suffered shipwreck two hundred years ago at the Island of Vanikoro.

Today's opinions as to the exact circumstances of the disaster are apparently still divided. Although numerous experts indulged in lively, often heated discussion over whether both vessels, the *Astrolabe* and the *Boussole* had been discovered at the bottom of the reef, or whether it was only the debris and a few priceless items of one of them — including cannon and a ship's bell — no definite consensus could be reached.

On 26 January 1988 another memorable bi-centenary will be ushered in as Australia commemorates the founding of the first convict settlement at Port Jackson (Sydney) just north of Botany Bay.

While Canadians will be left sitting out in the cold, so to speak, we may do well to send a trans-Pacific salute and reflect over a chain of events in past history, which linked the Pacific Northwest Coast not only with Lapérouse, but also with the Colony of New South Wales.



Jean Francois de Galaup, Comte de Lapérouse

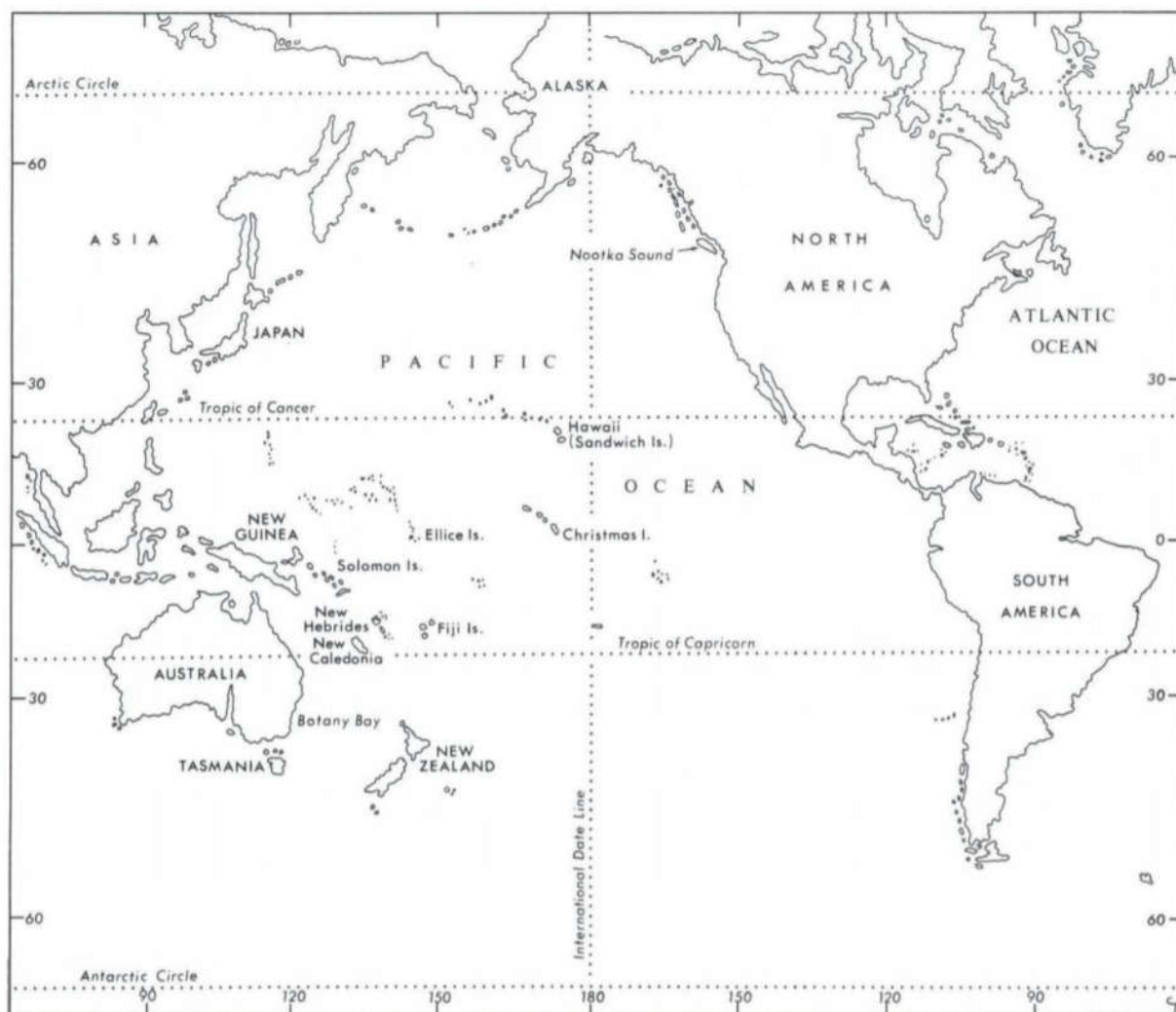
Why did France in 1780 contemplate sending a scientific expedition around the globe, and for what reason did the choice fall on Lapérouse?

Obviously, the triumphant successes of James Cook had earned the admiration of every nation and had long since eclipsed the achievements of the French explorer Bougainville made in 1769. As a result, even before the news of Cook's death reached Europe, Louis XVI decided to regain some of the prestige lost by France.

The choice of Lapérouse had not been a difficult one. Courage, intelligence and experience marked his distinguished career. During the French naval campaign in Hudson Bay in 1782 when, in keeping with orders, he destroyed three Hudson's Bay Company fur trading forts, he immediately arranged for arms and supplies to be sent to the survivors hiding in the forest. This act of compassion earned him the respect of the French as well as that of the British.

He had been serving the French Navy for twenty-eight years when he received his orders to lead the French expedition to the New World in the Pacific. With regard to the Pacific Northwest Coast, the instructions of 1785 were explicit:

Pour résumer ce qui est proposé dans ce mémoire et les observations que j'ai faites, écrit Louis XVI,



il y a deux parties: celle du commerce et celle des reconnaissances. Pour la première, deux points principaux: la pêche à la baleine dans l'Océan méridional, entre l'Amérique du Sud et le cap de Bonne-Espérance. L'autre est dans *la traite des pelleteries, dans le nord-ouest de l'Amérique*, pour être transportées en Chine, et, si on peut, au Japon.

(In order to repeat the proposal and the observations I set out in these instructions, wrote King Louis XVI, there are two principal parts: one dealing with commerce, and the second with exploration.

Concerning the former, there are two points of importance: the whale hunt in the South Atlantic between South America and the Cape of Good Hope. The other concerns *the preparation of furs (pelts) in Northwest America* for transportation to China and, if possible, to Japan.)

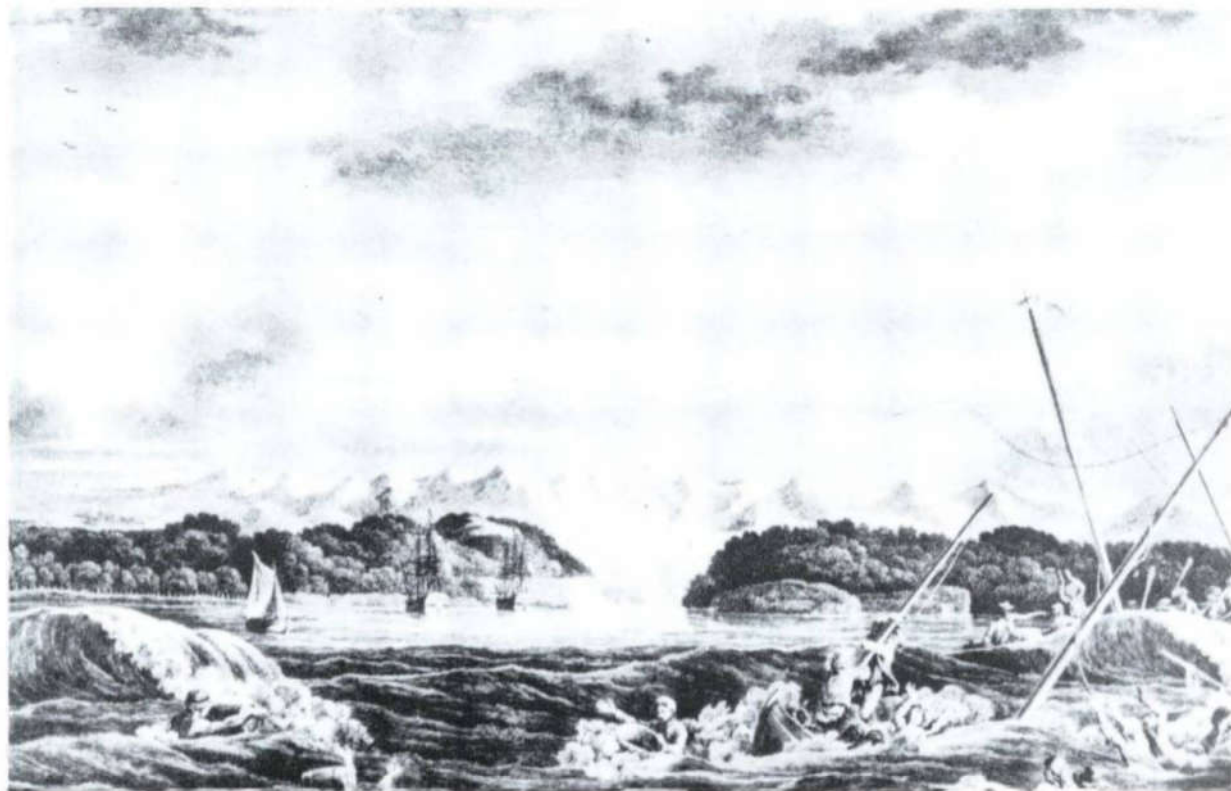
The visit of Lapérouse to the Pacific Northwest Coast in the fall of 1786 will always be associated with the

tragic foundering of his exploring party at L'tuya Bay, in which some of his best men lost their lives. Was this tragedy an omen to the fatal disaster which was to take place at Vanikoro two years later?

At the time, politics had not yet imposed artificial boundaries in the Pacific Northwest. New Spain had only recently introduced navigational surveys which were to proliferate toward the 1790s, and Cook with admirable precision had drawn up charts in 1778 north along the coast, which were to bring this part of the globe to international attention.

Apart from these activities, Russian exploration and maritime fur trade had been quietly dominating the northern Pacific waters since 1742, and before that. It seems that a combination of harsh geographic conditions, an unusually severe climatic regime and a multitude of navigational hazards had imposed a delaying effect upon the discovery of this area.

Yet despite these formidable obstacles, there were



The wreck of the boating party in which twenty-one men perished, L'tuya Bay, 1786.

two prime factors which excited the imagination of men and nations. One was the fabled Northwest Passage promising Europe easier access to the Spice Islands, and the other was the trade in precious sea otter pelts with China. Of course, the Russians had come first to look for both and had settled for the commerce in furs. Like Cook nine years before him, Lapérouse remarked in Kamchatka that despite the colossal distances involved by sea, and then some 3,000 miles by caravan across Siberia to Irkutsk, the Russians still stood to make a hefty profit at Kiahkta. The French commander's report then was entrusted to his interpreter, whose services would now no longer be needed, and who carried them across land to Paris.

On 24 January 1788, Lapérouse had reached the entrance of Botany Bay. Again luck abandoned him as adverse winds, high seas and treacherous counter-currents prevented him from reaching the shelter of the Bay inside which, he thought, he could discern some vessels shrouded in fog, lying at anchor.

Two days later, when weather conditions finally cleared, giving access to the entrance, he was met by the British First Fleet almost head-on. Under the leadership of the future Governor Arthur Phillip, the eleven vessels laden with their human cargo sailed proudly past the astounded Frenchmen, to the superior anchorage at Port Jackson in order to establish the convict

Colony of New South Wales — in the name of King George III of Great Britain.

With our attention shifting from Lapérouse to Botany Bay, it would be interesting to ask what early links existed between the first convict settlement and the Pacific Northwest.

Plans for the establishment of a colony situated conveniently between Cape Horn and the Cape of Good Hope had been raised in Britain during the latter half of the 1700s, as exploration and mercantile activities in the Pacific were on the increase. The strategic location of New Holland (Australia) was looked upon with a favoured eye and deemed to be suitable for the benefit of British trans-Pacific trade. In addition, it was seen as offering political advantages.

In a recommendation made by Sir Joseph Banks in 1786, the Motherland envisioned the future Colony of New South Wales as a "base for British ships proceeding to Nootka Sound in pursuit of the tremendous fortune to be made in pelts from selling furs to the Chinese".

In what way were British interests to be served by despatching vessels from Botany Bay to Nootka Sound for the capture of sea-otter pelts which were to be sold in China?

It may be remembered that toward the end of the eighteenth century, tea was the primary commodity

bought by Britain from China. As a beverage it had gained in popularity in England over ale until it was accepted as the national drink. As a result, the British Exchequer found itself increasingly handicapped by a trade deficit in favour of China. During the 1780s this was aggravated still further by a serious lack of specie.

Annual payments were being made to the tune of 7,000,000 pounds sterling, which required transportation to Canton by East India Company vessels, and consignments of silver from Spanish America were quietly being obtained in order to correct the trade imbalance. Then, of course, there was always Indian-grown cotton and opium provided by the Company. What better solution was there to pay for the continuing tea-drinking craze, than to cater in turn to the Chinese passion for luxurious sea otter pelts?

In 1783 James Matra, who had sailed with Cook on the *Endeavour*, submitted to Whitehall a "Proposal for Establishing a Settlement in New South Wales". This settlement, so Matra argued, would not only atone for the loss of the thirteen American colonies and constitute compensation for Empire Loyalists, it would give Britain decisive mercantile, political and navigational advantages by having a permanent establishment in the South Pacific. Besides, the plan linked New South Wales once again with the Pacific Northwest Coast of America.

Should this settlement be made, we may enter into a commerce that would render our trade to China, hitherto extremely against us, very favourable. The Aleutian and Foxes Islands, situated between Asia and America, which abound with the choicest furs, lie north of New South Wales. It is from these islands the Russians get the most and best of their furs, with which they carry on a very lucrative trade by land with the Chinese. Our ships that sailed under Captains Cook and Clerke, stopped at some of them and the skins which they procured then sold in China for 400 hard dollars each, though for the few they brought home, of the same quality, they only received about 10 pounds each. As our situation in New South Wales would enable us to carry on this trade with the utmost facility, we should be no longer under the necessity of sending such immense quantities of silver for the different articles we import from the Chinese Empire.

A somewhat different statement was made in 1785 by James Strange, who urged the British East India Company to establish its own posts on the Pacific Northwest Coast "instead of dissipating British energy on a colony at Botany Bay."

In 1790, the British Secretary of State for the Colonies, the Right Honourable W.W. Grenville, instructed Governor Phillips to have two British vessels discharged of their troops and cargo at Port Jackson,

Sir Joseph Banks



whence they were to sail for the Northwest coast of America. Here, "they were to engage in fur trade and lay the foundation for a new settlement."

Thus, accounts of early visits by famous seafarers and by some notorious fur traders first led to tentative plans linking New Holland with the Pacific Northwest Coast of America. This was an era when mail required six months or more to go half-way around the globe and colonies were faced by the constant problem of catching up with political events in Europe as well as with the implementation of new policies dictated thousands of miles away in London. Accordingly, it was inevitable that a number of orders stood in direct conflict with each other.

This seemed to be the case with the notion of a "Second Botany Bay at Nootka Sound" which did not find much further echo.

It is almost ironic that no sooner had the Colony of New South Wales been established than Nootka Sound, after the controversy, slipped from the focus of international attention to be relinquished by the white man for a long time to come. Nonetheless, a reputation for Vancouver Island, irrespective of its nature, had already been disseminated a few decades before the Hudson's Bay Company placed Fort Victoria on the map in 1842, and well before the Colony of Vancouver Island was founded in 1849.

More substantial and lasting trans-Pacific links were later to be forged between the Colony of New South Wales and the Colony of British Columbia. Nowadays, neither in Australia nor in Canada are a French king's sailing orders or the first grandiose designs connecting Botany Bay with Nootka Sound often recalled — were it not for such anniversaries or Bi-centennials, which sharpen our sense of historical awareness and serve as interesting reminders. ♦

Alix O'Grady of Victoria has made an extensive study of the history of the Pacific coast, especially the history of Russian-America.

Long before your city boys are astir the pit boy is awakened by the steam whistles, which blow three long blasts at half-past five o'clock every morning, thus warning him that it is time to get up. Breakfast partaken of, he dons his pit clothes, usually a pair of indifferent-fitting duck trousers, generously patched, an old coat, and with a lighted tin lamp on the front of his cap, his tea and dinner cans securely fastened on his back, he is ready for work. He must be at his post at 7 o'clock. Off he goes, and in a few minutes with a number of others, he is engaged in animated conversation, and having a high old time generally, as he is lowered on a riding rake to the bottom of the slope.

—Halifax Morning Chronicle,
4 December 1890.

CANADA'S BOY MINERS

By Robert McIntosh

Like children in other late nineteenth and early twentieth century Canadian communities, boys in colliery towns and villages worked. Like other children also, these boys started to work at an early age. Even well after the turn of this century, according to mining historian Lynne Bowen, "if a boy who had lived in a coal town got tired of school and was anxious to make a little money, the obvious thing for him to do was to go to work in the mines. If he was willing to lie a little and add a couple of years to his age, he could start to work at 13 or 14." A generation or two earlier, in the coalfields of Nova Scotia and British Columbia, boys as young as 8 laboured in Canadian mines.

Boys performed a variety of tasks at the Victorian colliery and constituted an important part of its labour force. In Nova Scotia, for instance, of a total mine workforce of five thousand in 1890, over eleven hundred were under 18 years of age. On the mine's surface boys were employed to clean miners' lamps, distribute picks, or run errands. They filled powder cans and tended mine animals — generally horses in Nova Scotia and mules in British Columbia. They sorted and cleaned the freshly mined coal.

The labour of boys was also useful underground. Although they were not actual miners — they did not cut coal — boys were indispensable to the transportation of the coal to the mine's surface and to the ventilation of the mine. The oldest boys were employed to load the newly cut coal in to the tubs used to transport it out of the mine; others worked as brakemen and landing-tenders, removing the filled tubs as they came down from the miners' workplaces and sending empty tubs back up. Horses or mules, usually "driven" by boys aged between 13 and 16, were used to pull the tubs of coal to the slope. There, cage-runners were employed in attaching the tubs to the mechanical hoist or "rake" used in hauling them to the surface. The youngest mine employees, some as young as 8, were responsible for the vital yet excruciatingly tedious job of opening and closing ventilation doors called "traps". "Trappers" sat all day in darkness, opening their trap to allow the drivers and their cargo to pass them, closing it to channel air up into the workplaces.

Few legal impediments to the employment of boys in the mine existed until well into the nineteenth century. (Girls, or for that matter any female, were never



Public Archives of Canada C 2 1076

Miners at the pit mouth, Coal Creek, Fernie, British Columbia, 1911.

employed at Canadian collieries.) In Nova Scotia, the only significant provincial restriction on boy labour in the mines was a minimum age of 10 established in 1873 and raised to 12 in 1891. Although in British Columbia regulations were nominally stricter (a minimum age of 12 was set in 1877; until the age of 14 boys were limited to thirty hours' work per week), in the absence of more than a handful of mine inspectors in either province, these laws were not always observed.

From the point of view of the mine operator, then, boys could be employed to perform a variety of essential tasks within the mine at a significantly lower rate of pay than adult mine workers. In 1880, Nova Scotian boys averaged 65 cents per day worked; adult labourers earned 95 cents; adult miners, \$1.45. Ten years later, at Nanaimo, a boy received \$1 per day; adult mine workers received anywhere between \$2 and \$4 for a day's work. Chinese workers in British Columbia were the exception. They were paid little more — and often less — than the boys, while performing similar work. As a consequence, much mine work that boys undertook in Nova Scotia was done in British Columbia by adult Chinese.

From his parents' perspective, the boy's labour provided extra revenue for the family purse. The money the boy earned was generally handed over to his parents as long as he lived at home — he received in return a small allowance. Although this may appear exploitative, the advantages of alternatives such as schooling were not apparent. Indeed, the view persisted

that formal education in some way "spoiled" a boy destined by birth to labour in a manual occupation.

Boys responded to mine work in a number of ways. Certainly there were always individuals, generally older boys, who entered the mine workforce eagerly. They could gain experience in their probable occupation as adults while at the same time earning money. "They couldn't keep me out of the mines," recalled a retired Nanaimo miner, "I was bred a coal miner."

Other boys were more reluctant to enter the mines. Most found themselves at work after their father had approached the mine manager to request a job. A retired New Waterford (Cape Breton) miner recalled as a boy "Coming home in the evenings and falling asleep while eating supper — the effects of rotten ventilation and damp. We in common with all boys, then obliged to work and eke out the family income, faced the prospect of a dismal and unhappy existence."

It was generally agreed, though, that in the mines the boys matured rapidly. Their behaviour towards both mine officials and older mine workers was highly assertive, reflecting a large measure of independence. Boys were described as "apt to take offence even more quickly than men." They were commonly thought also to strike more frequently and more readily than adult mine workers.

Although the typical boys' strike lasted only a day or two, their behaviour could have serious repercussions for other mine workers. When they struck the Springhill pits in 1906 for ten days, a public outcry developed against "foolish boys" who cost older mine



Public Archives of Canada C 30945

A 14-year-old miner ready for work.

workers, often their fathers, an estimated \$17,170 in forfeited income. In Bridgeport, Cape Breton, parents were not as patient. Parental authority was exercised after (horse) drivers had been on strike for four days in 1887. As the parents of the fractious youths considered that the step was ill-chosen they took the culprits in hand and sent them to work, reported the *Trades Journal* on 20 July 1887.

Typically, boys went on strike in defiance of mine officials' attempts to exercise their authority. One official ordered a boy to travel through a portion of the mine the latter believed dangerous. "The boy refused", reported the *Trades Journal*. "Harsh words passed between them, the boy using the harshest it is said." When the official sent the boy home, the other boys walked out, closing that portion of the mine. Later, the official complained, the boy puffed smoke in his face on his way to church.

A boy's career in the mine could take one of three courses. For the ambitious and the fortunate, positions in mine management were available. It was not uncommon for colliery officials to have been miners,

particularly after the establishment of night schools of mining and the introduction of compulsory licensing, based on competitive examinations, of mine officials. The career of J.R. Dinn in the "Caledonia" mine of the Dominion Coal Company provides an example. He first entered this mine at the age of sixteen, when he was employed to load coal into tubs. Good fortune, persistence, and night classes led to Dinn's appointment as mine manager in 1921.

For the least fortunate, mine work could lead to death or disability. The mine was a dangerous workplace. Day-to-day accidents, seldom noticed outside of the mining communities, took their toll. The youngest mine workers, relatively inexperienced and inattentive, were subject to a higher rate of accidents. A boy died, for example, in 1882 at Little Glace Bay after being crushed by a roof fall. A kick from a horse split a driver's nose in 1883; later that year a boy was run over and killed by tubs of coal at Sydney Mines.

The great disasters, much better publicized, killed fewer mine workers over the years. Most striking among these was the Springhill explosion of 1891. One hundred and twenty-five mine workers were killed immediately by the explosion, or were suffocated shortly afterward by toxic gases released by the blast. Seventeen of the dead were 16 years of age or younger.

Most boys would of course survive to be given a place as a miner when they grew to full strength, generally by the age of 18 or 19. In the meanwhile, boys would undergo an "apprenticeship" peculiar to the coal mines. Murdock McLeod, a Springhill miner with twenty years' experience underground, testified before royal commissioners in 1889 that he had begun mine work at the age of 9 as a trapper; he had "worked [him]self up" subsequently, spending years as a driver before getting a place as a miner. Another Springhill miner, Elisha Paul, explained before the same commissioners the variety of boys' occupations. Paul had been employed successively as a trapper, driver, brakeman, cage-runner, and loader before beginning to cut coal. When age or disability prevented the miner from continuing to work as a cutter, he could expect to be given light work on the surface, similar to that of boys. Some contemporary American mine workers said, "twice a boy and once a man is the poor miner's life."

The boy shared not only the workplace but also a community with older miners. The popular view of the turn of the century mining community, one which portrayed the miner as dissolute and thriftless, illiterate and degraded, failed to acknowledge the widespread commitment within mining towns and villages to Victorian ideals such as temperance, self-improvement and respectability.

Certainly some miners — and mine boys — played their part in perpetuating an unfavourable view of the miner. The revelry of payday was habitual. In Stel-



Boy miners in B.C., early twentieth century.

Buildings at No. 3 Slope, Springhill, Nova Scotia, 1897.





A pit boy.

larton in 1888 two particularly "drunk and disorderly" boys aged between 12 and 14 were jailed in the course of their merry-making. Nineteenth century elections were also boisterous occasions. "A hard looking sight was seen on [provincial] election day. Several small boys not more than 10 to 12 years, were seen paralyzed through drink", reported the *Trades Journal* in 1889. Hallowe'en demanded its rituals also. The *Trades Journal* commended boys on their behaviour on that evening in 1887. "They contented themselves with waving torches and doing a little shouting."

Some mine workers *did* spend all their leisure time in the "rum-hole", a routine enlivened only by the occasional dog fight or cockfight or, more regularly, by a brawl among the miners. The smallest mining communities, where single men predominated, were the most notorious. Joggins, a mining village in the vicinity of Springhill, was reported to boast "one general store and, by report, twenty grog shops".

Although Salvation Army officials had harsh words for all Nova Scotian mining towns on their arrival in that province in the 1880s, they were particularly demanding judges of human behaviour. Westville was labelled "the worst place this side of Hades"; and

Springhill, "one of the dark spots of our Dominion, drinks, gambling and profligacy abounding."

Like older mine workers, some colliery boys enjoyed their "wee drop" and provoked the ire of their more "respectable" contemporaries. These included not only Salvation Army officials but also fellow coal miners. "What would the village, or in fact any place," complained the miners' union newspaper, "be without the 'wee drop' that gives us more than school or college, that wakens wit, and kindles lore, and bangs us full of knowledge." Beside institutions such as the "rum-hole" flourished others, more in keeping with Victorian standards of conduct. Churches in Nova Scotia were at times supported by deductions directly from miners' paycheques; a strong tradition of temperance existed as well in the province. Mine boys and their fathers participated in organizations such as the "Sons of Temperance".

The principal activity associated with children today — their schooling — was undertaken before boys entered the mine workforce, or on days when the mine was not operated. Compulsory school attendance was introduced in Nova Scotia in 1883, but only for children aged between 7 and 12 and only for eighty days per year. In Cape Breton, where mines were closed for two or three months every winter, pit boys had an opportunity then to meet their schooling requirements. Elsewhere this legislation might well be ignored. British Columbia had introduced province-wide compulsory attendance even earlier, in 1876, also for 7 to 12-year-olds. There at least six months' attendance per year were stipulated. As was the case with mines legislation, though, in the absence of effective means of enforcement, school laws were not always observed.

The colliery boy survived well into this century. In British Columbia even a minimum age of 15 for mine work was not legislated until 1911; not before 1923 was Nova Scotian legislation forthcoming whereby boys under 16 were prohibited from mine work. Prior to those dates, however, their relative numbers in the mine workforce had dwindled as underground haulage and ventilation systems were improved and as adult wages rose. Both factors reduced the need for child labour in the mines, as tasks they had traditionally performed became mechanized and as family need for their wages diminished. At the same time, provincial governments became more effective at enforcing the laws they passed. Means of inspection were improved and penalties were stiffened. The child, excluded from the colliery, entered the classroom, a movement encouraged by increasingly stringent provincial regulations concerning compulsory schooling. By the end of the 1920s, the colliery boy had given way entirely to the school child. ♦

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Matterhorn Whymper Rides the CPR

England's Celebrated Alpinist in the Switzerland of America

By JOHN HAYMAN

By the early years of the twentieth century, the Canadian Pacific Railway's attempt to attract tourists to the Rockies was well established. Brochures advertised the region as the "Switzerland of America" and depicted decorous and well-dressed travellers set among sublime mountain landscapes. Hotels were opened at Field (1886), Glacier (1887), Banff (1888), and Lake Louise (1890). Outfitters were attending to the needs of both modest excursionists and more ambitious climbers; Tom Wilson was perhaps the most famous of them, having first served on the reconnaissance survey for the CPR in 1881 and "discovered" Lake Louise at that time. In 1899, the CPR also hired two Swiss guides, Edward Feuz and Christian Hasler who took up positions for the season at Glacier in the Selkirks.

When Edward Whymper was approached by the CPR in 1900, following a lecture tour in North America, it probably seemed therefore that he would fit well into the corporation's publicity programme. Whymper was, after all, the most celebrated Alpinist of the past century, having ascended the Matterhorn in 1865 after seven unsuccessful attempts. The tragedy accompanying this triumph, when four members of the party fell to their deaths during the descent, had drawn additional attention to the enterprise, and Whymper had remained "Matterhorn Man" as a result of both his lectures throughout England and North America and his publication *Scrambles Amongst the Alps* (1871). In 1900, however, he merely travelled by train from Montreal to Vancouver and back at the CPR's invi-

tation — a preview of the more extended excursion he arranged to make, under CPR auspices, the following year.

His visit of 1901 was publicized well in advance of his arrival at Banff on 9 June. As Robert Campbell, his outfitter, later remarked: "The Canadian papers were full of stories about him . . . It became fashionable to write about him. Reporters rushed to libraries for material. You could hardly pick up a paper that did not have something about Whymper."

Whymper, perhaps unintentionally, encouraged high expectations by sending ahead thirty boxes of supplies and by arriving with his own guides from Europe. The leader among them was Christian Klucker, from the Engadine, who was described by Whymper as "a strong man, who can hold me off the ground with one arm." Also from Switzerland, there were Christian Kaufmann, from Grindelwald, and Joseph Pollinger, from St. Niklaus in the Valais — the latter, "a first-rate man on rock and glacier, who spoke German, French and a little English," according to Klucker, who later published his recollections in *Adventures of an Alpine Guide* (1932). Finally, there was Joseph Bossonay, from Savoy, described by Whymper as "a rapid walker, who came down from the top of the Brevent to Chamonix (a descent of 4,840 feet), in thirty-one minutes." Clearly, this was a highly professional and promising party. In fact, there seemed to be only one interested group which was uneasy about Whymper's intentions. "It consisted," Robert Campbell noted, "of the men who made their living by conducting mountain climb-



Edward Whymper, aged 25, at the time of his ascent of the Matterhorn in 1865.



Edward Whymper, aged 70, two years before his death in 1912.

ers into the mountains. We knew from experience that once a mountain was climbed it became, as it were, a dead duck." Similarly, J. Norman Collie, the mountaineer, wrote to a colleague of Whymper's probable assaults on unclimbed mountains: "Why the devil he couldn't leave them alone I don't know. He will simply gobble up the whole lot . . . All I can say is *damn* the man! . . . Why I am so mad about it is that it is not done for sport at all or because Whymper has any real liking for the hills. From the beginning it is dollars."

As it happened, this foreboding was without basis. A man of sixty-one years in 1901, Whymper had by this time little of his former ardour as a mountaineer. Soon after arriving at Banff, he met Arthur Wheeler, who was to become President of the Alpine Club of Canada. "I hear you have come out to Canada to climb Mt. Assiniboine," Wheeler remarked. "Not so," Whymper replied. "A man does not climb mountains like Assiniboine after he is sixty years old." In referring to a mountain whose very contour seemed to many to resemble the Matterhorn, Wheeler may have touched here on memories that were upsetting rather than inspiring.

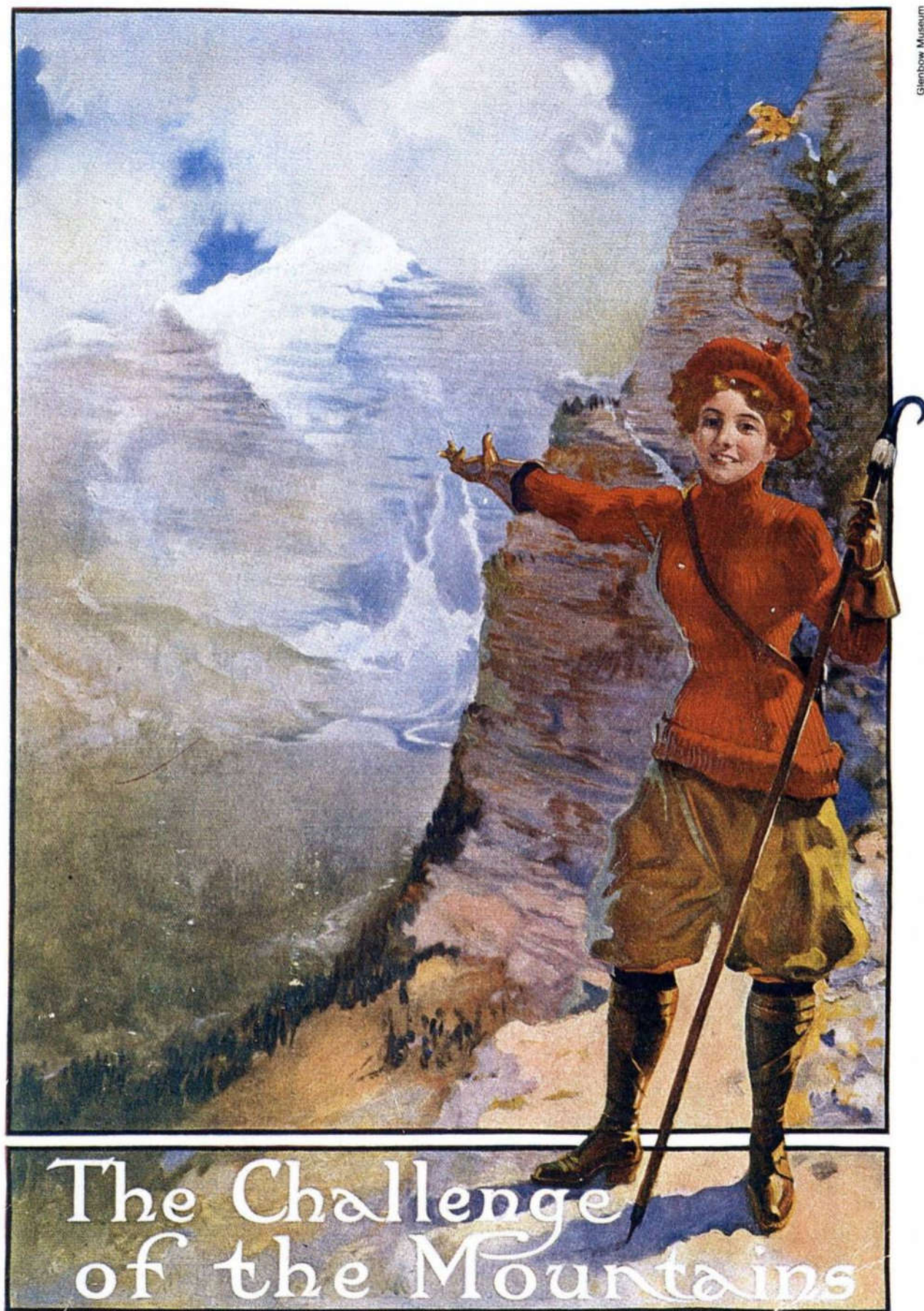
Later, Whymper was to acknowledge in a published account of his 1901 excursion, that his intentions had

been by no means definite. "No distinct programme had been fixed," he wrote, "except that we were to occupy our time in the neighbourhood of the crest of the main range of the Rockies." This indefiniteness was particularly puzzling to the Swiss guides — until they concluded that there was an ulterior, commercial basis for the enterprise. Christian Klucker later wrote:

I should like to tell a long tale of our deeds in the mountains of Canada, but unfortunately I had missed my reckoning. Our expectations were far from being fulfilled. The whole enterprise remained a riddle, so far as we four guides were concerned. Our proposals were never carried out, but were rejected from the start. It became gradually apparent to us that Whymper was merely there by way of propaganda for the Canadian Pacific Railway, because we were never more than two good days' march from the railway line.

This dismissive account is not, however, entirely just. Granted Whymper did not accomplish anything like the grand ascents that were expected of him, he was

The Challenge of the Mountains, produced shortly after the turn of the century, was the first CPR brochure to feature a full colour cover.



The Challenge of the Mountains

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Camp at Emerald Summit Lake, possibly that of Edward Whymper's party.

nonetheless able to point to some considerable achievements.

On 18 June Whymper's party set out from Banff for Vermilion Pass, accompanied by Bill Peyto, a local guide, and "7 baggage animals". In itself, this would seem a sufficient outfit, but a couple of days later Peyto was sent back to Banff for further supplies: "40 lbs Potatoes, 30 lbs Bacon, 15 lbs Beans, 40 lbs Flour, 2 Jars Marmalade, 1 bottle pickles . . . and 1 bottle Scotch." Not surprisingly, Klucker was later to complain: "Our badly arranged expedition lacked mobility."

The primary intention at this stage was to find a mountain which would provide a clear view towards the northwest, and Whymper found one to the west of Vermilion Pass which he named Mount Francklyn, after the Montreal photographer who had joined him at the outset. Unfortunately, this vantage point did not present any new discovery, and Whymper decided to move to the mountains in the vicinity of Lake Louise.

Their exploration was made miserable by bad weather, and Whymper whimsically renamed the days of the week: "Stormday, Rainday, Mistday, Hailday, Thunderday, Snowday, Sleetday." Despite this, Whymper was able to record rather nonchalantly some

success: "To ascend mountains was not the errand upon which we were bent," he remarked, "though in idle moments two of the party did cut off the head of the Mitre (an aiguille between Mts. Lefroy and Aberdeen), and some others took the same liberty with Mt. Whyte — summits which had not been reached previously."

Following these ascents and others, Whymper moved headquarters to Field on 18 July with the intention of exploring the Yoho Valley. Here, Whymper could feel that he was leading the way for future tourists. "Although its mouth, since the opening of the railway, has been passed and repassed annually by many thousands of persons," he noted, "no one seems to have thought about exploring it, and until five years ago it had not even got a name." Later, Whymper again thought it possible to make claims for his party's achievement — having "effected ascents of all the mountains in the Upper Yoho, and made passes out of the valley to the north, south, and west."

A more detailed account of these achievements is provided by Reverend James Outram who joined Whymper for a two-week period and recorded his experiences in *In the Heart of the Canadian Rockies*

(1906). In an appendix, Outram listed "First Ascents" made at this time — expeditions on which Whymper himself was not always present:

The PRESIDENT . . . 10,200 ft. Aug. 9, 1901. J. Outram, C. Kaufmann, J. Pollinger.

MT. HABEL . . . 10,600 ft. Aug. 15, 1901. J. Outram, E. Whymper, C. Kaufmann, C. Klucker, J. Pollinger.

MT. COLLIE . . . 10,500 ft. Aug. 19, 1901. J. Outram, E. Whymper, C. Kaufmann, C. Klucker, J. Pollinger.

CATHEDRAL MOUNTAIN [MITRE] . . . 10,284 ft. Aug. 26, 1901. J. Outram, J. Bossonay, C. Klucker.

In describing these successes, Outram presents camp life as altogether convivial:

One of the chief delights of camp life is the fire. Its cheerful blaze and lusty crackling logs lure every one to its vicinity and invite the greatest sociability. It is a democratic institution of the most powerful and valuable type. All are equals under its potent influence, and conversation flows apace.

This is, however, a surprising account, since there were times on the expedition when Whymper chose to dine alone, and he often struck others as high-handed in his attitude to subordinates.

Whymper's inclination for alcohol also seems to be related to a remoteness of manner, since he was by no means merely a social drinker. Robert Campbell remarked on Whymper's extraordinary capacity:

Never have I known such a man. When out on the trail his daily allowance was one bottle of House of Commons Scotch and ten pints of ale . . . Yet I have never seen him under the influence of liquor. Many think that it is impossible, nevertheless it is true. What he drank around the hotel no one can guess. I have never been in his rooms when I saw him farther from a Scotch and soda than the length of his arm.

This staggering amount of alcohol Whymper seems to have accommodated within an air of sobriety. By keeping others at a distance, he was apparently able to maintain an equilibrium.

Whymper's own journal indicates, however, that the expedition of 1901 had its difficult moments. Most of the climbs were not technically demanding, and the Swiss guides continued to question the point of the enterprise. As Whymper noted, one of them frankly declared: "I think to go up these mountains is quite foolish." Similarly, Klucker was later to remark: "For days we went here and there more or less aimlessly forcing our way through thick forest and undergrowth, often in pouring rain and wet to the skin." Furthermore, the Swiss guides had no interest in Whymper's concern with climatic and geological observations, nor with his protracted attempts at photography. Again, Outram wrote of these endeavours sympathetically, remarking on Whymper's "doing very thorough work in his characteristically energetic and patient way . . . and making valuable observations in almost every branch of scientific research." But to the Swiss guides,

The summit of Mount Collie. This mountain was among the "first ascents" Whymper claimed during his 1901 visit. (From Scribner's Magazine, 1903).



the five-hour investigation Whympers undertook on a summit seemed downright unprofessional. Bill Peyto also found Whympers apparently high-handed attitude increasingly irksome, and towards the end of August he was paid off. (After carefully calculating the amount due to him as \$646.35, Whympers later noted with obvious chagrin: "I paid him by error one dollar *too much*.")

Following the departure of Peyto and Outram, who went off to climb Mount Assiniboine, Whympers turned to Ice River Valley for the final part of the season — "an almost unknown valley," he noted, "very valuable from tourist and commercial points of view." However, explorations were at first hindered by the lack of an outfitter. In early September, the contract with the Swiss guides also expired. The departure of the guides, following some disagreement about pay, was not entirely amicable. "Kaufmann and Pollinger behaved decently, and shook hands as the train was leaving," Whympers noted in his journal. "The other two put themselves out of sight." Unfortunately, Whympers subsequent relations with other Swiss guides were no better. In late September, he ascended Mount Wapta with Christian Hasler and Christian Bohren, but a disagreement led to their separation on the descent — and to Whympers having to forgo his pride when he became lost and was forced to follow Hasler out.

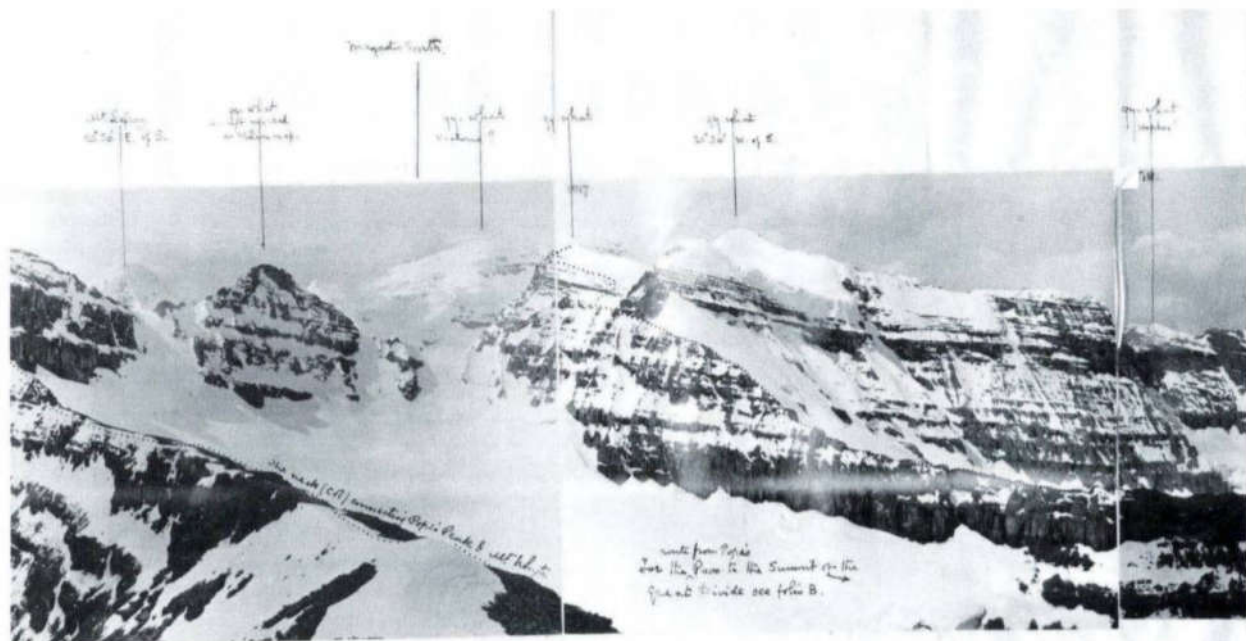
Whympers stayed on in the Rockies to the close of the year, without any clear programme. During this period, he saw the visit of the Duke of York to Field on 29 September. "The Duke and most of the persons in his train alighted" Whympers noted. "He came in to the Hotel and walked about it, but seemed to take a very slight interest in the scenery. I kept out of the way." A man of many enterprises, Whympers also became interested at this time in the sodalite which he had come across in Ice River Valley. He thought it strange that this rare mineral should have no commercial value since it seemed to him that "in beauty of color [it] rivals or excels *lapis lazuli*." With an eye to future development, he subsequently reported to the CPR: "I am taking a sufficient quantity of it to Europe to bring it before the public, and hope that the result will be beneficial to Canada and to yourselves." For the most part, however, Whympers seems to have concerned himself with sorting out the photographs he and Francklyn had taken over the summer and making lists of the minerals, insects and plants that he had collected. This was the activity of a scholar and a gentleman, and Whympers seems to have aspired to this status, rather than to that of either a mountaineer or a publicist for an emerging international corporation.

Indeed, throughout his 1901 excursion, Whympers experienced difficulty with both those in his employ and his sponsor. With the Swiss guides, there had developed a comedy of cross purposes. "Why did he

so curb our spirit of enterprise?" Klucker was left questioning. "In the same length of time we could have accomplished much more." Ironically, in similar terms, Whympers complained in his journal: "Instead of being roused by my example (I am always at work) the more I do the less they seem inclined to do." There were similar misunderstandings between Whympers and his Canadian outfitters. Whympers's peremptory and condescending manner clashed against a vivid personality such as Bill Peyto, who had, according to a contemporary, "an air of bravado". As Robert Campbell remarked in his reminiscences: "Mr. Whympers had been used to dealing with people who would knuckle down to him. Here it was different. Never in all his life had anyone ever told him to go to hell." According to Campbell, it was only at a late point in the expedition that Whympers's attitude changed. "From then on, . . . we grew to be great friends," Campbell noted, "and I became his Canadian *fidus Achates*."

Whympers's relations with the CPR were also uneasy. The CPR had granted him £315 before he set out, but this amount did not meet his expenses at all comfortably. For its part, the CPR may well have questioned whether it had gained much from the expedition. The most immediate result was Whympers's "Private and Confidential" report, dated 3 January 1902 and written just prior to his sailing for Britain. The report provides sensible advice about improving trails, but these recommendations scarcely depend on Whympers's expertise as an alpinist. At some points, too, his recommendations seem to express personal bitterness rather than a disinterested concern with the CPR's future. Of the use of Swiss guides, for example, he recommends: "1. That they should upon the whole be paid less . . . 2. That they should work more . . ." Other sections of the report reflect Whympers's standing as a scholar and gentleman with entrepreneurial interests; he notes, in particular, that he is returning to England with some 2,000 entomological specimens — and the expectation that they might excite "hopes and cupidity; for I expect that a large proportion will prove to be 'new to science'."

The CPR had hoped that Whympers would publish accounts of his excursion, but almost a year passed before two letters, headlined "Round About the Great Divide", appeared in the London *Times* (December 16, 27, 1902). In these letters, Whympers is certainly effusive enough. He compares the view of the Rockies from Calgary to that of the Alps from the plains of Italy. "No one should miss it," he declares. Of the train journey through the mountains to Vancouver, he writes: "Views and vistas of valleys and ravines, of torrents, rivers, lakes and waterfalls, peaks and precipices, succeed one another continuously." In his second letter, he is especially concerned to recommend the area around Field as a winter resort, and he pro-



Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies, Banff NA 66-2259.

1876 feet
 Panorama of part of the Lake Louise Group, taken from
 the ridge (C.T.) between Pope's Peak & Mt. St. Helens.
 The height of Pope's Peak from mean of S.M. of M. St. Helens is 9423 feet.
 View of part of the Lake Louise group annotated by Whympier.

vides reassuring figures about the winter weather. He is equally reassuring about wild life. "With ferocious wild beasts we had no encounter," he remarks, perhaps rather laconically.

A more detailed article on the 1901 excursion was subsequently to appear in *Scribner's Magazine* (June 1903). Here, Whympier's attempt to attract visitors to the area is apparent from the very title of the article: "A New Playground in the New World". However, it seems that the article did not attract much notice. Indeed, in an obituary of Whympier in the *Canadian Alpine Journal* (1912), the writer remarked that "Whympier published no account of his Canadian explorations" — an error subsequently repeated in the *Dictionary of National Biography*. Altogether, it is not surprising that the CPR should have informed Whympier in 1902 that they were not interested in his coming to Canada that year.

However, this apparent lack of interest on the part of the CPR merely delayed Whympier for a year. On 23 June 1903, he sailed from Liverpool for Quebec. Shunning the ease of shipboard life, he walked more than ten miles a day on deck — intent on training himself for a trek along the railroad tracks that he

planned in the Rockies. In Montreal, he outlined this plan to Robert Kerr, General Passenger Manager of the CPR, but Kerr was apparently not impressed by the plan. According to Whympier's journal, Kerr suggested an exploration in the "Lake Louise region, the valley of the Ten Peaks, round about Field, and the Yoho with the idea of suggesting new trails . . . also with the idea of discovering locations for roads over which auto carriages could be run for tourists. Also an exploration along the Crow's Nest Pass Line with the idea of locating a suitable point at which an hotel or chalet could be erected." To Whympier these directions must have seemed entirely too demanding. In response, he asserted that the season was too far advanced to carry out such varied activities and rather obstinately he declared he would carry out his railroad walk. The following year, he would take up the other suggestions. "I make no stipulations in regard to money," he added.

Accordingly, Whympier set out early in August with Harry Tattrie and Robert Campbell, intending to walk over five hundred miles from Kananaskis Falls to Yale. Almost immediately, the unpleasantness of the project became apparent. "One had to step from tie to tie,"



The Great Takakkaw Fall, Yoho Valley. Whympers described it as "the loftiest cascade in the Dominion — a sort of Canadian Yosemite". (From Scribner's Magazine, 1903).

Whympers noted in his journal, "as the immediate spaces were not ballasted. This alone made the walk monotonous and tiring." There were some hazards as well. A guide was supposed to meet them and conduct them through a tunnel at Rogers Pass, but he did not appear, and Whympers's party had to find its own way in the dark by feeling out the rails with a stick. On another occasion they were almost run down by a train which they did not hear approaching them from behind because of the sound of water in the river beside them. After three weeks of travel, during which they sometimes walked twenty-five miles a day, they arrived at Revelstoke, and Henry Tattrie, perhaps understandably, threatened to leave.

Whympers himself seems to have found some relief by turning from these unpeopled regions and recalling European scenes. Of Lake Sicamous, for example, he noted: "Chalets might be built around it and on its promontories as upon the Lake of Thun & Brienz. At present there is not a single settler." The lake itself, he noted further, was a "combination of Windermere and Lugano." Similarly, Shuswap Lake was "a reminder of Loch Katrine." The Thompson River was "as clear as the Mediterranean, with foliated banks

reminding one of Cliveden on the Thames." Further along the Thompson, near Ashcroft, it was the Rhone below Lyons that came to mind — "but there were no vines on the slopes — they were naked and uncultivated." No doubt such connections with European scenes might serve as pointers for the CPR, but they seem also the comparisons of a lonely traveller with nostalgic inclinations. All the same, Whympers completed the trek to Yale, later reporting to the CPR that he had passed through a hundred tunnels and snow sheds and across four hundred and fifty-six bridges.

This walking of the tracks may well strike one as a humiliating experience for the most renowned mountaineer of the day — and perhaps just as humiliating is the persistence with which Whympers returned to Canada in successive years. In 1904, he again made the now familiar crossing from Liverpool to Montreal, without having made clear arrangements with the CPR. Fortunately, Robert Kerr was quite accommodating over lunch at the St. James's Club in Montreal. "He gave me tickets for myself over the whole system," Whympers wrote in his journal, "and passes for my men, and orders for two guides to be supplied for 10 days." In addition, he was to receive reduced rates at hotels. Subsequently, Whympers was grateful for this assistance, since he found costs had greatly increased over previous years. A meal that cost 25 cents in 1901 now cost 70 cents. "Eggs & bacon," he noted, "cost 45¢ or nearly 2/-."

In 1904, Whympers did not explore much new territory. He left the major climbing accomplishments — the first ascent of Crownsnest Mountain — to Wilson, his outfitter, and Christian Hasler and Friedrich Michel, two Swiss guides. Whympers himself seems to have been more concerned to establish trails for tourists in regions visited earlier. On 7 July, for example, he noted of the junction of the Yoho River and Kicking Horse River: "The junction will become a favourite spot with tourists when a sufficiently good trail is cut to it. At the present there is considerable risk to trousers and petticoats." By 8 July, some of the obstacles had been removed, as noted in a wire to Robert Kerr: "Entry to Yoho Valley has been made and trail blazed from the mouth to Emerald Summit Lake." Today a corporation might be able to make something out of Whympers's activities. "Trail laid out by Edward Whympers" — this might have the designer-touch now accorded to golf courses. At this earlier time the CPR seems to have increasingly felt unable to use Whympers's services.

Finally, in 1905, when Whympers returned yet again to Canada, a memorandum from the CPR was forwarded to him which indicated his redundancy:

With regard to 1905. It seems to me that nothing further is necessary at the present time; we have enough mapped out ahead to cover several years'



*Emerald Summit Lake,
an illustration from Scribner's Magazine, 1903.*

work and the Government have now, as they should have done from the start, taken in hand the opening of the National Parks.

Whymper had intended to explore the Valley of the Ten Peaks, but there was clearly no point in doing this. Sadly, on arriving at Field, he arranged to auction the considerable amount of equipment he had amassed over the years — but even here he was to be disappointed. "It was a failure," he noted of the subsequent auction, "— not half the lots were sold." On his way back to England in late September, he attempted to clarify his position with the CPR and was told that there was interest in his writing of Canada in newspapers and magazines. "I said plainly," Whymper noted in his journal, "that I would not write unless paid for the work." With that prickly assertion, Whymper seems to have broken off connection with the corporation. In February of the following year (1906), he noted in his journal: "No communication has reached me . . . down to this date, and all communications between myself and the company cease."

Whymper's last visit to Canada was therefore under different auspices. In 1909, at the invitation of the Alpine Club of Canada, he attended the summer camp at Lake O'Hara. On the voyage to Montreal, he was surprised to find six other members of the British Alpine Club, including A.L. Mumm ("of Champagne fame"). Whymper had apparently supposed he was the single guest of honour, and he pointedly kept to himself throughout the voyage. In other ways also, he was not accommodating. On his way to the camp, he agreed to be interviewed only when the reporter supplied him with beer. At the camp itself he was withdrawn. One of those present later remarked: "His countenance was dour, and I did not once see him smile." His address to the hundred assembled campers was later described in the *Canadian Alpine Journal* as "memorable"; it was also somewhat sententious, and the style suggests that it was delivered with a stiff upper lip:

Ladies and gentlemen, live, live while you can. We're born to live, but born to die. Unite prudence with courage. Take heed to your steps lest you fall. Whatever you set your hands to do, do it with all your might. Act well your part, there all the honour lies.

A more directly personal note is touched at only one point:

This, ladies and gentlemen, is the first, and it will be the last occasion on which I shall have the honour to speak to you. I came out from Europe expressly for this meeting, and tomorrow I start back. But, if unable to be with you in body, I shall, so long as I live, be with you in spirit, and wish you success and prosperity.

Whymper was present at the camp for only three of its nine days, and he was back in Montreal to embark on the *Empress of Britain* exactly one month after he had left for Canada. On board, he adopted the routine to which a restless person may incline. Of his shipboard walks, he wrote: "9 times down the Promenade Deck, round the corner, down the other side and back to starting-point is almost exactly one mile."

His repeated visits to Canada — during which he travelled over much of the same ground in successive years — have the same mixture of restlessness and routine, determination and indefiniteness. These same qualities are perhaps also reflected in his equally frequent visits to Chamonix in his later years. Admittedly, he had at Chamonix the specific task of up-dating a guidebook he had written on the region — but his visits far exceed the number of its editions. Finally, it was at Chamonix on 16 September 1911 that Whymper died at the age of seventy-one.

As for Whymper's Canadian visits, it is clear enough what the CPR hoped to achieve from them: publicity for its tourist resorts. For his part, Whymper enjoyed being lionized — on his own terms. But the lionized individual is also one who is set apart, and increasingly Whymper seems to have become a rather lonely figure. This loneliness is apparent not only during his Canadian visits. In England he is said to have rented an apartment house and kept the floors above and below his residence vacant so that he would not be disturbed. In Canada — that "great lone land" — he found a fitting setting for this isolation, even as he sometimes resented this reinforcement of his separateness. Whether we think of him during his first visit when he stayed on into the winter, during his final visit when he kept to himself on a convivial camp-out, or during those sea voyages when he strode the decks alone, this isolation is equally striking. It may seem a final irony that one who held himself apart should also have had the task of attracting people to a region. ♦

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FRANCIS CONROY SULLIVAN

An Architect Ahead of His Time

By Dorothy Chisholm

I am your friend because I believe you have tried hard to do something superior in your work and tried to do it honestly."

In these lines from a letter written around 1917 American architect Frank Lloyd Wright paid tribute to a brilliant, eccentric and neglected Canadian architect named Francis Conroy Sullivan.

Sullivan's career was closely linked to that of Wright and his unhappy personal relationships were similar to Wright's in many respects.

Frank Lloyd Wright was born in 1867 and, while Sullivan was 15 years younger, the life work of each was to introduce a new architectural idiom to his compatriots and to span two radically different cultural periods. In Sullivan's case the task was considerably harder. Canadian architecture, traditionally conservative, was destined to remain for the most part outside the mainstream of the modern movement until after the Second World War, long after Sullivan was gone.

The era into which Wright and Sullivan were born was steeped in Victorian and Edwardian ideas of style and applauded the construction of buildings that glorified classical revival design. There seemed little opportunity for non-conformists like Wright and Sullivan. Wright, at least, had the advantage of being surrounded by like-minded contemporaries. Sullivan almost single-handedly introduced the modern movement to Canada.

Sullivan was born in Kingston, Ontario, on 2 July 1882. His mother was Irish-born. His father was Irish-

American. Like Wright, Sullivan came from a family of modest financial means. His father was, in turn, a detective, a CPR employee and a carpenter.

Wright's father, too, had pursued a number of occupations, being at various times an itinerant preacher, school teacher and lawyer before divorcing his wife in 1885 and disappearing from the scene. Wright's mother became a strong influence on him, propelling him into a career in architecture. Sullivan, on the other hand, was largely self-motivated in his passionate desire to be an architect, but his mother, like Wright's, was a major source of encouragement to him.

Both men had strong Celtic roots. Wright made much of his Welsh heritage, naming his home Taliesin ("shining brow") after a Welsh poet. Sullivan inherited an Irish flair for creativity and a gregarious, if irascible, disposition.

Like Frank Lloyd Wright, Sullivan never attended an architectural school. Instead, he studied on his own and took correspondence courses. In Ottawa, where the family moved in 1900, he became an apprentice carpenter to his uncle and later a part-time draftsman for the Canadian Booth Co., a furniture manufacturer.

In 1903 Sullivan's skills in draftsmanship landed him a job with the Ottawa architect Moses Edey. This proved to be a fortuitous move for Sullivan since Edey was working on the Daly Building at the time and Sullivan was involved in the drawings for the project. The building was originally designed to house a department store and Edey had made a trip to New York to



The house in Ottawa's Sandy Hill district that Sullivan designed for his family in 1914. It has the typical fenestration of the Prairie School.

seek inspiration from the new Broadway edifice that housed Macy & Co.

The Daly Building turned out to be Ottawa's only example of the so-called Chicago Style of office building, a rare sight in the turn-of-the-century capital and a totally uncharacteristic venture for Edey. (The Daly Building narrowly escaped demolition in the 1970s. It was preserved only through efforts on the part of local admirers and is now being renovated.)

In 1905 Sullivan left Moses Edey's firm to become a draftsman for Alex McDougall, a civil and hydraulics engineer. In 1906, he became an architect in the office of E.L. Horwood, a busy but strictly conservative architect.

While Sullivan was trying to get a foot in the door of the Canadian architectural establishment, Frank Lloyd Wright was already well launched in the U.S. Before the turn of the century he had left his home in rural Wisconsin to work for the brilliant, eccentric architect of commercial buildings, Louis Sullivan, in Chicago. It was there, at age 21, that he married Catherine Lee Tobin, the daughter of a wealthy businessman. The marriage gave Wright social status and eventually a family of six children whom he housed in the exclusive suburb of Oak Park. His talent brought him clients and fame. By 1900 — which marked the beginning of

what came to be called the Prairie School — Wright had already built 60 homes.

By 1907 he had found that, as he later put it "domesticity bore down on me", and he acquired a reputation for a rather uninhibited lifestyle.

In the same year Francis Sullivan, no longer able to stomach his contempt for the stick-in-the-mud attitudes of the Ottawa architectural fraternity, headed for the U.S. It is not clear whether Sullivan actually made contact with Wright at that time, because we soon hear of him in Oakland, California. There he worked on plans for the San Francisco pest house. A year later, however, he was back in Ottawa with a job as a civil servant in the Department of Public Works.

In 1910 Sullivan, like Wright, married a woman from a higher social level than his own. Mildred Genest was the daughter of Samuel Genest, a well-known and respected civil servant.

Francis Sullivan's marriage was a bad match almost from the beginning and, like Frank Lloyd Wright's first two marital ventures, was destined to end unhappily. However, unlike Wright who had three wives and at least one well-documented liaison with the wife of a client, Sullivan managed to remain with his only wife, Mildred, for 17 years.

Along with a non-conformist approach to architec-



City of Ottawa Archives

The Daly Building, Ottawa's only "Chicago Style" building, photographed in 1913 during construction of an addition. Sullivan worked on the drawings while a draughtsman for architect Moses Edey in 1904.

ture and a dedication to work that excluded much thought for the sensitivities of their wives, Wright and Sullivan shared a flamboyant style and a vigorous contempt for public opinion.

Sullivan consistently refused to join professional associations and, while some fellow architects thought him merely eccentric, others despised him. He was noted for a lack of tact and a violent temper. There are stories of fist fights with workmen and on one occasion, while working on the construction of a hospital, he found a partition that didn't meet his approval. The enraged Sullivan demolished it with an axe.

It has been recorded Sullivan was annoyed with Bishop Fallon of Ottawa for not directing more commissions his way. The architect bought a particularly ugly bulldog which he named Bishop Fallon and was seen walking the dog up and down Sparks Street in Ottawa, addressing it by name and cursing it roundly.

Sullivan kept his job in the Chief Architect's Office of the Department of Public Works for the three years before his marriage to Mildred Genest and for one year after. While there he worked chiefly on three post office buildings located in Souris, Manitoba; Elora, Ontario; and St. Roch, Quebec. However, his penchant for "modern" found no expression in these conventional buildings which were executed in classical revival

and Italianate styles. At the same time Sullivan moonlighted on the side, sometimes in partnership with Moses Edey.

In 1911 Sullivan resigned from Public Works to strike out on his own. He left, ostensibly, because of ill health, but more likely because he was passed over when it came time to appoint a new Chief Architect.

As it turned out, 1911 was a most significant year for Francis Sullivan because it marked the beginning of the most productive period in his tragically short career. Although it is not certain when Sullivan and Frank Lloyd Wright had first made contact, by 1911 their association was solidly confirmed.

The first commission of Sullivan's independent career was as architect for the Pembroke Public Library. Wright produced the original drawings for this project and, despite rejection because of excessive costs and a subsequent redesign by Sullivan, the library was built within the idiom established by Wright and enthusiastically adopted by Sullivan.

Although Wright was certainly Sullivan's chief mentor, the disciple was by no means a slave to the master's style. In this respect, Sullivan differed from most of Wright's followers, many of whom merely imitated him. Sullivan, on the other hand, understood Wright's philosophy of "organic" architecture, realizing that its application would produce solutions that were exclusive to each situation. Merely copying Wright's style would not be to apply the principle with honesty — and honesty was a quality much admired by Wright.

Sullivan liked many of the design details that appealed to Wright — the decorative urns and applied wooden strips on the well-preserved Connors house in Ottawa are good examples — but his use of them was usually different enough to be an expression of his own taste. Both preferred casement windows and are noted for their distinctive fenestration and use of decorative glazing bars. They also shared a taste for boldness rather than elegance, impressive fireplaces, projecting eaves and "honest" materials such as wood, brick, stone and roughcast.

The ideology behind Wright's approach to design was one of unity — a close relationship between building and site, a harmonious blending of technology and nature. In his autobiography, Wright described his home, Taliesin, as being not *on* the hill, but *of* the hill.

Materials, plan and structure were intensely connected and Wright extended this concept to the furnishings and ornaments which were integrated in the architectural setting. He was an avowed admirer of the simplicity of the British designer William Morris and was greatly influenced by Morris throughout his career.

This break with the traditional styling of the nineteenth century was part of a general ferment within

the architectural world. There were others, too, who looked for alternatives to Classical Revival and it was this group who surrounded Wright at his Oak Park studio at the turn of the century and who made up the so-called Prairie School. Their rebellion was part of a larger movement in Europe, exemplified by the Arts and Crafts Movement in England and the work of the Scottish architect Charles Rennie Mackintosh.

Most of Wright's colleagues at Oak Park had, like him, been influenced by the genius of Louis Sullivan, as had Francis Sullivan. Although they were not related, the two Sullivans shared more than a name. Louis Sullivan's eccentric personality, his brief, unhappy marriage and tendency to drink excessively were personal problems not unlike those of his younger namesake. When Louis Sullivan was dying, he was visited by Francis, to whom he presented a set of his sketches.

It is inevitable, given the premise of Wright's philosophy that "organic" architecture necessitates an individual response on the part of the designer, that Sullivan would differ from Wright in a number of ways. He did not share, for example, Wright's preoccupation with internal space. Wright, inspired by the low, sweeping landscape of the prairies, dwelt heavily on horizontal lines and a feeling of openness, while Sullivan was more apt to introduce vertical lines and more solid masses.

That Wright liked and admired his Canadian disciple seems clear. In correspondence he addresses Sullivan as "My dear Fras" and signs his letter "Affectionately". He commends Sullivan for having "a higher ambition than most I have known."

From its beginnings at the turn of the century, the Prairie School had steadily spread its influence, but around 1914 its popularity in the U.S. began to decline in favour of traditional styles. Wright went bankrupt. Ironically, Sullivan at that time was at the height of his success, having designed a number of important homes in Ottawa as well as apartment buildings, churches, schools and post offices. The Horticultural Building in Lansdowne Park and the Hopewell Smallpox Hospital (described in a 1912 *Contract Record* as "one of the finest examples of a hospital building on the continent") were among the prolific output of his years of private practice in Ottawa from 1912 to 1916. Those buildings completed during the first two years, although admirable, were not especially progressive, relying heavily on classical forms. But from 1914 on Sullivan seemed to find his true mode of expression.

In 1913 Sullivan had collaborated with Frank Lloyd Wright on a park shelter at Banff, Alberta and, although this structure is sometimes attributed exclusively to Wright, most of the work was done by Sullivan. The two collaborated on other structures during this period, including at least one house in Ottawa. Wright



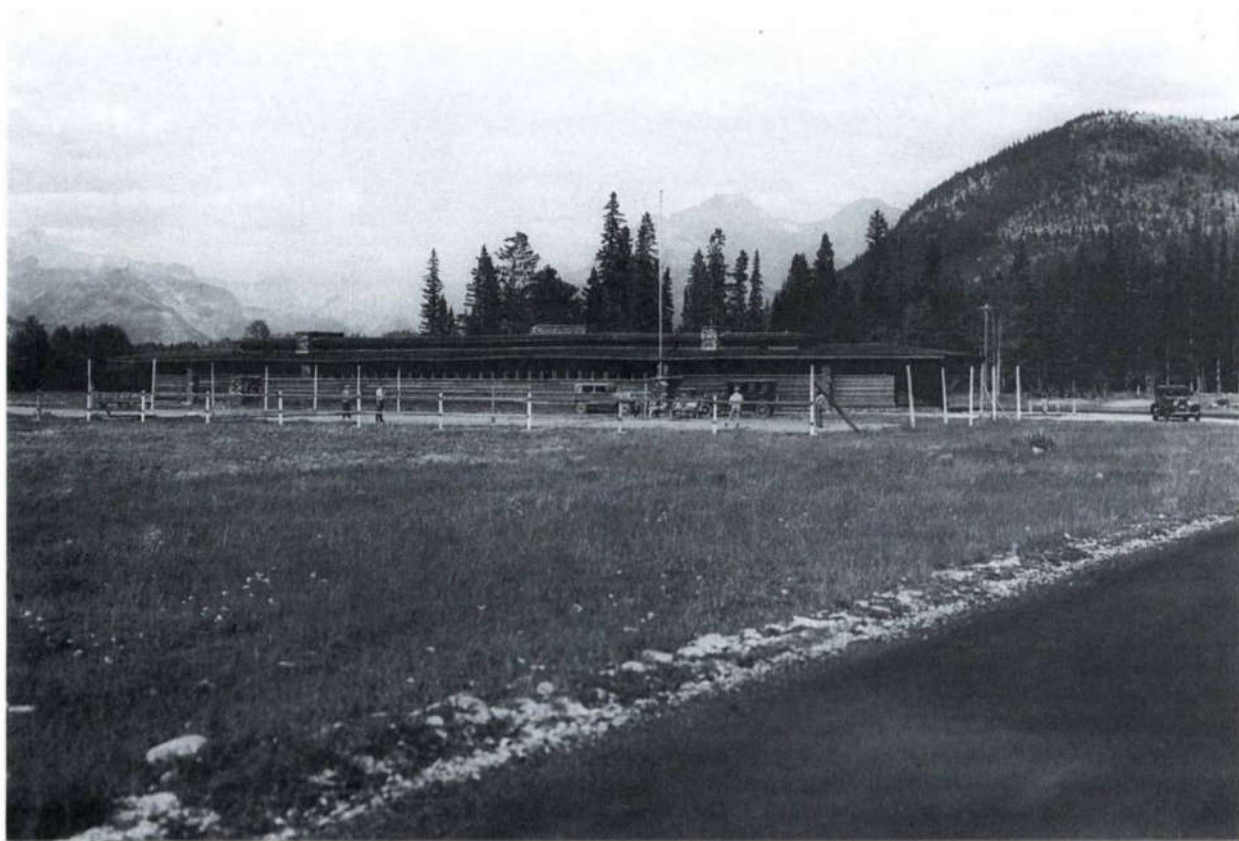
Sullivan as a young architect.

visited Sullivan in Ottawa in 1916. It was in 1916, as well, that an exhibition of Wright's work at the Art Institute of Chicago included three projects by "F.L. Wright and F.C. Sullivan, associate architects".

During his short career, Sullivan worked on scores of structures of all kinds. A curious example of his versatility was an underground public "comfort station" which was built on the corner of Sparks and O'Connor Streets in Ottawa at a cost of \$15,000. It was considered luxurious but was apparently a source of great embarrassment to Sullivan's eldest daughter Frances. Eventually, it was sealed up like a tomb at the request of the Bank of Montreal which was locating nearby and worried that the underground convenience might present handy access for robbers.

Although a number of Sullivan's structures from this prolific period, including the Banff park shelter, have since been demolished, those that remain form a valuable legacy. These include a house on Somerset Street in Ottawa's Sandy Hill district, built by Sullivan in 1914 for his own family which by then included three of his four daughters. This house, a two-storey, flat-roofed structure, is distinguished by the small, vertical windows, projecting eaves and decorative wood bands that were typical of the Prairie School. In fact, the house bears a striking resemblance to one built in River Forest, Illinois, in 1910 by another associate of Wright, William E. Drummond.

Sullivan also designed furniture for the Somerset



*The park shelter, Banff National Park, built in 1913, demolished in 1939.
The original drawings bear the notation "Frank Lloyd Wright and Fras. C. Sullivan."*

Street house in much the same manner as did Frank Lloyd Wright in many of his Prairie Style residences. In line with the Wright concept of integration, a good deal of the furniture, largely made of B.C. cedar, was built-in and thus survived several occupancies. Unfortunately, subsequent owners destroyed much of the distinctive Sullivan work, tearing out or painting over interior woodwork and demolishing a decorative urn that had graced the front entrance.

It is a sign of the official neglect of its architect that only recently has the Sullivan house been designated as being "of historical and architectural value". It is likely that other Sullivan-designed structures still standing in Ottawa will be similarly designated as historical sites. One is the Edward P. Connors house, distinguished by the two decorative urns on either side of the facade and its strong vertical and horizontal lines. Another is the large and impressive, although less well-preserved, Patrick J. Powers house on the corner of James and Bay Streets. Unfortunately, although the exterior elements of these houses are essentially unchanged, the interiors have been considerably altered.

One well-preserved example of Sullivan's style, which indicated that his work was becoming more ambitious,

is the Dunning house on Acacia Ave. in Ottawa's Rockcliffe Park. It is made up of three receding sections unified by the bold line of projecting eaves and distinguished by strong corner piers. So starkly modern is this house that it is hard to imagine what the Ottawa public thought of it in 1914. It is probably a tribute to Sullivan's skill that it was accepted at all.

The Dunning house marked a departure for Sullivan. From 1914 on, although his work appeared to become more simple, it was actually becoming more complex, depending less on superficial decoration and more on the organic concept. The result was increasing clarity of design.

During his prolific period, Sullivan was in frequent contact with Wright and visited him at his Chicago office and at his Wisconsin retreat, Taliesin. Sullivan often took his family along on these visits and Mildred Sullivan was well-acquainted with Wright. From the beginning their dislike was mutual. Wright, perhaps because of his own unhappy marital history, considered Mildred a negative influence on Sullivan's career.

It was at about this point that Wright wrote to Sullivan that he hesitated to "suggest any permanent connection between us because you are so be-deviled with your domestic situation".

After Sullivan's death, Wright wrote a letter to the architect's sister, Mabel Whelan, in which he said, "This whole thing seems rather tragic to all of us for he had lots of good stuff in him and but for the constant razzing which he received he might have come through into usefulness again."

It seems likely that it was Mildred whom he thought was doing the "razzing".

In Frank Lloyd Wright's 1932 memoirs, *An Autobiography*, one looks in vain for revealing references to Sullivan, but he does mention Sullivan's final illness and calls him, with obvious good will, "that good, Canadian Catholic Frank Sullivan". Given Wright's towering ego and firm conviction that he was seldom, if ever, wrong, it is not surprising that in his extensive memoirs he gives little credit to his many associates.

The early years at the Wright studio in Oak Park were marked by a high rate of turnover among apprentices. His biographer H. Allen Brooks attributes this, partly, to Wright's "callousness concerning pay". Wright had frequent and recurring money problems, particularly after 1914 when the Prairie School fell out of favour.

In a letter to Sullivan, Wright makes a number of references to his financial situation. He says that "where and when I can help you I am ready — the trouble is I have been so weakened in my resources by ten years of the social enmity directed toward me that I am a more fit subject to be helped than to help". However, he encloses a cheque "for \$50.00 which you can use as you see fit. We won't count it."

When it came to money matters, Wright and Sullivan were well-matched. While Wright was preoccupied with his fluctuating fortunes, Sullivan seems to have had a contempt for money and is reputed to have handled it badly. One story about Sullivan describes how, when a client complained that a \$50 fee was too high for the design of a house, Sullivan settled the account by tearing up the drawings.

It would be unfair to blame the Sullivans' marital troubles entirely on his association with Wright. From the start, marriage and family life were subordinated to Sullivan's consuming passion for his architecture. His flamboyant nature, legendary temper and tendency to drink contributed little to his being accepted in the social circles to which his wife aspired. Mildred could hardly be blamed for thinking that, given her husband's obvious talents, had he followed a more conventional path they would have enjoyed a very comfortable and stable life.

Some of Mildred's bitterness toward Wright seems to have been due to her belief that Wright took advantage of her husband. If so, the criticism seems unfair given that the association was obviously more to Sullivan's benefit than to Wright's.

Wright was aware of Mildred's feelings and acknowledged to Sullivan that an estranged associate of his had spread the story that Sullivan's connection with Wright had cost Sullivan as much as \$50,000 with no return. Wright obviously thought the story had originated with Mildred Sullivan and did not hesitate to say so in writing to Sullivan. However, in a magnanimous gesture, Wright says "If I were to pay attention to the mean minds that feed on my situation and my weaknesses I wouldn't do anything, so let's forget it."

In 1915 Wright had been asked to design the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo, a commission he welcomed after being virtually broke. For the next five years he was busy with this project, which brought Francis Sullivan back into his circle.

Sullivan's work in Ottawa had dried up and, by 1916, his independent practice had come to an end. At the age of 34 he embarked on a nomadic period, moving from one place to another, dragging his increasingly alienated family along with him. His first stop was Taliesen where he worked on drawings for the Imperial Hotel project.

The sojourn was brief. In 1917 he was back in Canada, working as an architect for the Military Hospitals Commission. He became director of construction for the Military Hospital in Ste-Anne de Bellevue and designed at least seven other hospitals. It was while the family was living in Ste-Anne that the Sullivans' fourth daughter was born. Within a year, a scandal involving irregularities and theft of materials erupted and, although he was not implicated in the affair, Sullivan resigned.

He returned to Ottawa in 1918 and became an architect at City Hall. Three years later another scandal, this time involving shoddy work at a housing development in the suburb of Lindenlea, again caused Sullivan to resign in disgust after publicly castigating those he thought were at fault.

It was around this time that Wright, still involved with the Imperial Hotel project, offered Sullivan a job as supervisor of construction in Tokyo. Sullivan, whose health was precarious at the time, had to enter hospital and was not able to accept Wright's invitation.

In 1921 Sullivan left Canada for good. After a brief stay in Elyria, Ohio, the family moved on to Chicago and from 1922 to 1927 Sullivan was employed by a number of firms there. He also "moonlighted" from the family apartment.

One of the characteristics shared by Wright and Sullivan was an affinity for the "drawing" side of architecture. When, in 1922, Sullivan met a quiet, retiring young draftsman named Adolph Kriewall they became an inseparable team for the next five years. Sullivan was the ebullient leader, Kriewall the admiring apprentice. It is said that Kriewall learned to draw



City of Ottawa Archives

Horticultural Building, built in Lansdowne Park, Ottawa, in 1914, photographed during renovations. Windows and eaves display typical Sullivan and Wright touches.

so much like Sullivan that it was impossible to tell which one had done the work.

Several anecdotes involving Sullivan's drawings suggest that he had a mischievous side. According to one such story, when a potential client complained that Sullivan was too "modern", he traced details of the Chateau Laurier, signed his name and added the drawings to his portfolio. Another story involved a competition held by the Eberhard Faber Pencil Company in 1924 for drawings executed with their products. Sullivan, although he had never been in Europe, submitted a sketch of a European scene. The drawing won him a small award and subsequently appeared as part of a company advertisement.

Sullivan's Chicago career was both productive and stormy. He became a registered architect, joining the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada and the Ontario Association of Architects. He became a U.S. citizen. He also went on binges that lasted for days and sometimes upset his family by bringing home shabby characters he met in bars.

1927 marked the beginning of the end of Sullivan's career. His association with Kriewall ended, his wife and children separated from him and he was operated on for cancer of the throat.

His friend Frank Lloyd Wright, whose work had not been well received after he returned to the U.S. from Tokyo, had again experienced grave financial problems. However, in 1926, when he was working on a hotel in Phoenix he received a commission for a desert resort complex — San Marcos in the Desert — in Chandler, Arizona.

In 1928, with his fortunes on the rise once again, Wright invited Sullivan to join his staff in Arizona. The expectation was that the desert air would help Sullivan recuperate. Sullivan accepted Wright's offer but the anticipated happy outcome was not to be. In

March of 1929 Sullivan collapsed. He was rushed to hospital in Phoenix and five days later was taken to the nearby Eucalyptus Sanatorium.

On 4 April Wright sent a telegram to Sullivan's sister, Mabel Whelan, saying "He has a slim chance to live, doctor says none, but he will not give up. Advisable you come immediately if care to see him alive and help him to go away happier."

Sullivan's own telegram sent on the same day was even more terse: "Send love to children, father and you. Am dying." Before the day was over, he was dead at the age of 47. Wright himself made the arrangements to return the body to Canada.

Even after Sullivan's death, Wright could not forgive the long-suffering Mildred. He sent a rather mean-spirited letter to Mrs. Whelan, saying, "Mrs. Sullivan wrote me a sobbing letter, extremely sentimental, concerning Francis, to which I have not replied. I feel that he has suffered altogether too much at her hands to warrant anything further from him".

Two years after Sullivan's death, Mildred died of leukemia. Their four children were cared for by the devoted aunt Mabel.

Francis Sullivan's achievements, like those of Frank Lloyd Wright, were greatly undervalued during the years of their association. Unlike Sullivan, Wright lived long enough to finally enjoy success and recognition in his own country and internationally. He died in Arizona in 1959 at the age of 92 and was returned to his beloved birthplace.

Thirty years earlier Sullivan, too, had been returned to the place of his birth. He was buried in the family plot in St. Mary's Cemetery in Kingston.

Francis Conroy Sullivan deserves a special place in the history of Canadian culture. He was, like his mentor Frank Lloyd Wright, far ahead of his time. He spurned the legacy of Victorianism to become the first practitioner of modern architecture in Canada.

In 1951, in a note to Robert Hubbard, a curator at the National Gallery of Canada, Frank Lloyd Wright wrote of his Canadian disciple, "Fras" — as we called him — was a brave fellow and a competent one. His end was tragic." ♦

Dorothy Chisholm is a Toronto freelance writer.

The Roots of Modern Canada

By J.M. Bumsted

ESSAYS ON NEW FRANCE

By W.J. Eccles. Oxford University Press, Toronto, 1987. 220 pp. \$14.95.

RELIGION IN LIFE AT LOUISBOURG, 1713-1758

By A.J.B. Johnston. McGill-Queen's University Press, Kingston and Montreal, 1984. 223 pp., illus. \$30.00.

NEW FRANCE 1701-1744 A Supplement to Europe

By Dale Miquelon. McClelland and Stewart, Toronto, 1987. 345 pp., illus. \$39.95.

THIS UNFRIENDLY SOIL The Loyalist Experience in Nova Scotia 1783-1791

By Neil MacKinnon. McGill-Queen's University Press, Kingston and Montreal, 1986. 231 pp. \$29.95.

In an era in which the garbage dumps of Ottawa — transferred to the Public Archives of Canada and known euphemistically as "Record Groups" — are scoured by Canadian historians searching for the tracings on the blotting paper of some bureaucratic mandarin in the hopes that such evidence will finally explain The Growth of Modern Canada, it is refreshing to see that some historians are still writing about the eighteenth century. Such scholars are under no illusions about the "relevance" of their work, but a good deal of sensitive and sensible history is appearing and on the whole it probably tells us a good deal more about modern Canada than

many would allow. It is probably fair to say that early Canadian history, particularly for a century in which the groundrules of life are both well-established and quite different from our own, is an acquired taste. But readers tired of modern bureaucrats and political rhetoric should give it a try.



Grey Nun, Montreal, eighteenth century.

A good place to begin would be with W. J. Eccles' *Essays on New France*. Eccles is the doyen of Anglo-Canadian historians writing on early French Canada, and he has spent his entire academic career interpreting the subject for the larger English-speaking audience in Canada and the United States. But Eccles has been far more than a mere reporter or synthesizer of the scholarship of another tradition. Like many "outsider" historians, he has been openly iconoclastic and revisionist, taking advantage of the fact that he does not and need not

share the assumptions and values of his French-Canadian colleagues.

Eccles begins this collection of revisionist essays with a personal memoir, a combination of autobiography and intellectual self-appraisal. In it he not only makes clear the influences upon his work, but offers a number of illustrations of his sharp and acerbic wit. His remarks about Winnipeg, where he began his teaching career in 1953, are typical of his frankness:

Winnipeg has, I am told, changed greatly in the intervening years. Then it was an absolute horror: no bookstore, not a single decent restaurant, liquor laws drafted by the temperance movement. Aesthetically the city was enough to reduce one to tears. . . . The climate, in my view, rendered the city uninhabitable. When I arrived the temperature was in the upper 90s Fahrenheit. Five months later it was 40 below, where it remained for weeks on end. The university campus at Fort Garry had been located, by decision of some political genius, about ten miles from the edge of town on the bald prairie.

Eccles also found his first year of teaching difficult, chiefly because he was forced to deal with post-eighteenth century Canadian history with a secondary literature that "consisted of little more than what one politician had said to another." When he queried his colleagues "how much bread" the various political movements "had put in the mouths of the poor, they looked at me in consternation. The condition of society was then of no concern for the practising Canadian historians." Whether much has changed

since 1953 is less relevant than the point that Eccles, like many early Canadian specialists, was then and throughout his career more interested in "the condition of society" than the rhetoric and manoeuvrings of the politicians.

All of the twelve articles herein reprinted are Eccles at his iconoclastic best, whether they are assessing Francis Parkman's still influential interpretation of early French Canada or the role of the Church in the colony of New France. The two best pieces are probably the belated "review" of Harold Innis's famous book on the fur trade, and the analysis of the significance of the military establishment in New France. In the first, Eccles comes down hard on Innis for his limited use of primary sources, a typical problem for earlier scholars not able to take advantage of new technology and research grants. But granted that standards were different, it still does seem remarkable that Innis could produce a work often considered definitive on the fur trade without ever glancing at the vast riches of the Hudson's Bay Company Archives, now in Winnipeg.

Eccles also demonstrates that Innis did not really understand the French fur trade very well, and he quite rightly calls into question the conclusion of Innis (and others) that the French were not economically competitive with the English. On the military, Eccles successfully demonstrates that military considerations and especially military expenditure were central to the operation of New France. With another backhanded shot at Innis and the older traditions of Canadian political economy, he concludes that in the early period "war, and the threat of war, was one of the great staples of the Canadian economy." This book is good stuff, worth reading to follow one of the master craftsmen of Canadian historical writing at work.

Given the number of topics in the eighteenth century requiring investigation and reconsideration, the surfeit of work on eighteenth-century Louisbourg seems at first glance a case of overkill. Certainly no community in eighteenth-cen-

tury Canada — perhaps none in eighteenth-century North America — has received such extensive analysis and dissection, chiefly propelled by the modern reconstruction of the fortress by Parks Canada. At the same time, there are some obvious advantages to the proliferation of work on a single subject, particularly in the depth of analysis possible under such circumstances. A. J. B. Johnston's *Religion in Life at Louisbourg, 1713-1758* clearly benefits from the available literature. The result is a solid if unspectacular work, limited by the uniqueness of the historical community itself, which means that Johnston has difficulty relating his findings to the larger world of eighteenth-century Canada. His concluding call for "other studies of the religious life in contemporaneous settlements so that the representative and unusual qualities of the Louisbourg experience will stand out more clearly," is on one level quite justified, on another an admission of imaginative failure. Nevertheless, the study does demonstrate the manifold ways in which religion played a role in French America.

Religious life and thought is not an important theme in Dale Miquelon's *New France 1701-1744*, the latest volume in the Canadian Centenary Series and one that completes its coverage of early French Canada. This work is a synthesis of the recent scholarship on New France, much of it the author's own work, and it owes a good deal to the tradition of Anglo-Canadian scholarship on French Canada nurtured over the years by Bill Eccles. Unlike Francophone scholarship, which tends to treat New France in exceptionalist terms that concentrate on the internal dynamics of the colony, Miquelon sees New France as a colonial outpost of a vast and bureaucratic imperial state. One could do worse than seek the Origins of Modern Canada right here. As might be expected from his earlier work, Miquelon is especially good on the economic and commercial aspects of the colony, particularly on the complexities of the fur trade (and its political-imperial ramifications) and growing overseas commerce. New France in this period included Acadia, truncated as it was in 1713 by the Treaty of Utrecht, and its development has been incorporated into the total picture.

This work is not in any sense an "easy read". Miquelon has not adopted a narrative framework that propels the story along, and his concentration on economic matters takes his reader up some highly

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specialized paths. Like most such books, a good deal of prior knowledge is assumed, and while his academic audience can hardly help but admire the skill with which Miquelon has put the literature together, the absence of a clear narrative line and the tendency to view matters in terms of larger trends and currents rather than at the personal level of individual action will make this work hard going for the general reader. One comes away with no sense of any interesting historical personalities in operation for this period. Despite the difficulty of accessibility for any but the academic reader, this book remains a must for anyone interested in the early development of Canada. At the same time, it demonstrates once again the difficulty of meeting the general mandate of the Canadian Centenary Series to write for both the "general reader as well as the scholar."

Finally, we turn from French Canada to English Canada imme-

diately after the American Revolution. In *This Unfriendly Soil* Neil MacKinnon offers one of the most extensive and detailed studies of the Loyalist migration to British North America, focussing particularly on the colony of Nova Scotia, which — before it was partitioned in 1784 to produce Cape Breton and New Brunswick — had received well over half of the Loyalist settlers who came to this country. The Loyalists are still a topic capable of evoking emotional responses from large numbers of Canadians, and much mythology has grown up over the years, very nearly obscuring the historical movement of population itself.

MacKinnon's book is an exercise in careful scholarship that adds up to an entirely fresh and revisionist look at the Loyalists. Those readers who still believe that the Loyalists were the "cream" of the society of the American colonies had better stay away from this study, although

it has moved well beyond the stage of demolishing such a notion of the new arrivals onto a whole new level of problems and questions, most of which implicitly call into dispute even more fundamental and time-honoured assumptions about the nature of Loyalism. While every chapter repays careful reading, the two blockbusters are chapters five ("A Fragmentary Profile") and ten ("Adjustments and Departures"). In the earlier chapter, MacKinnon demonstrates how tenuous are the generalizations about the moral virtue of the Loyalists, adding that a fair percentage of those settled under Loyalist programmes in Nova Scotia were not Loyalists at all, being either disbanded soldiers (perhaps 20% of Nova Scotia's "Loyalists" were disbanded British regulars, probably mainly Irishmen) or late arrivals from America drawn by subsidies. In the latter chapter, he drives home just how important the subsidies were in attracting settlers, and how many

Canadian types of the Old Regime, from New France 1701-1744.



returned to the United States when they came to an end.

Ironically enough, MacKinnon himself shies away from the implications of his findings. In his epilogue he allows that for the existing resident of Nova Scotia the refugees "were not so much loyalists as they were displaced persons, not so much martyrs as simple casualties of a war, thrown upon his shores by the upheaval of revolution," adding that the pre-loyalists claimed loyalty as well. But, having demonstrated that many "Loyalists" were something else, that thousands returned to the land whence they had supposedly fled forever as soon as the subsidies ran out, that their influence has been overestimated, MacKinnon refuses to downgrade the Loyalist immigration into merely another wave of settlement. His readers may wish to go further.

These books remind us that the roots of modern Canada go back a good deal further than 1867. Moreover, they emphasize that there are not only interesting topics in the early period, but some very competent historians at work on them.

J.M. Bumsted is Professor of History at St. John's College, University of Manitoba.

Hero Worship

By Trevor Lautens

HARD CHOICES A Life of Tom Berger

By Carolyn Swayze. Douglas & McIntyre, Vancouver and Toronto, 1987. 256 pp. illus. \$24.95.

Tom Berger is a curious case. As a politician, he was relatively quiet. As a judge, he was so outspoken that his peers pressured him to resign. Freed from the bench's constraints on saying his piece, he lapsed into relative silence. In his early fifties, he remains in the lapse. It is incomprehensible that some devoted New Democrats, at least in British Columbia, utter his name in the same breath as Tommy Douglas's.

This book, though bravely stressing that Mr. Berger is back grappling with the law he loves, resonates with an aura of obsequies for the freshly departed. If the intent was to breathe life, the result is to confirm death. Every page is a spade-pat of the earth over the grave.

The dead of course are those of whom no ill is spoken, and the author, once a "mature" student of Berger's, scarcely violates the ancient injunction. Whether inhibited by her veneration of the subject, blessed with the natural gift for writing speeches at party fund-raising dinners, blocked by mediocre skills of inquiry and interpretation, or perhaps badly served by an editor who insisted on a telly talk-show level of chattiness, Ms. Swayze's industrious and extensive interviews of Mr. Berger's associates and family give the impression that no one is quite sure what she's up to, but are cautiously assuming that Mr. Berger is or soon will be dead. (That very thought went through Berger's understandably puzzled head: at their first interview he asked Ms. Swayze, apparently without humour, "Do you think I'm about to die?") This air of tribute, of final testimonial dinner, for a man of undoubted ability and sensitive intelligence who at 54 ought to be at the height of his career and savagely resisting any hint that his future is behind him, is odd. Unless it's all too painfully true.

Ms. Swayze's account of Mr. Berger's early years — usually the most fascinating part of and the most instructive clue to the Great Man's life — is reduced to nine unsatisfactory pages. Thomas Rodney Berger was — is — the son of an RCMP officer, Theodore Berger, himself the son of a judge in Sweden. The relationship was unhappy; Ted left for Canada at age 20 and, astonishingly, didn't contact his Swedish kin for half a century. Many families are shaped by a single traumatic event that enters family folklore and stamps the children's beliefs forever. In this case, a mysterious wrong was perpetrated on Ted while he was posted in Victoria:

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Read these and other fascinating articles and reviews in the February/March 1988 issue of The Beaver.

"He chose to enforce the law against a high-ranking and well-connected naval officer." After this tantalizingly unexplained episode, Ted Berger was given poor postings, lost heart, and eventually, convinced that he had no future with the force, "had little choice but to retire." Thereafter he worked irregularly or not at all.

Tom worked his way through the University of B.C. law school with logging and sawmill jobs, married while a student, and, much influenced by an old lawyer named Tom Hurley and even more by Hurley's wife Maisie, who had a passion for native Indian plights, made his mark as an up-and-coming labour and civil rights lawyer. Ms. Swayze gives little sense of the immense disappointment of Berger's political career. In a profession that for effectiveness demands patience, staying power, and long service, Berger's career defined not so much brevity as a short attention span. In his youth a Liberal, he joined the

CCF in 1960 and at 28 was provincial president of its successor the New Democratic Party. He was a member of the brief 25th Parliament in 1962 but in 1963 had the distinction of being beaten within six months both federally and provincially. His leadership of the NDP in B.C. was literally an April-to-September romance: in those six months of 1969 he was narrowly chosen leader (over the NDP's future-and-only B.C. premier, Dave Barrett), was trounced on the hustings, and quickly resigned.

Ms. Swayze only hints at the cold ruthlessness, well remembered by old Victoria legislature-watchers, with which Mr. Berger deposed his predecessor, Robert Strachan, a decent and much-respected carpenter whose loyal service deserved far better. And she doesn't mention that in that 1969 election campaign, perhaps nothing undid Berger more than his taunt of Premier W.A.C. Bennett, nearing his 69th birthday, as "a pathetic old man desperately

clinging to office." They were a young man's words and they were cruel and they had a nasty edge of truth. They may have described Bennett; they illuminated Berger. He was defeated in his own riding, an object lesson of Bruce Hutchison's dictum that while the public may not be able to grasp a policy it seldom misunderstands a man.

Mr. Berger was far better as a lawyer. One celebrated case served as a curious prelude to the political showdown with Bennett. Berger successfully took to the Supreme Court of Canada a slander action against Bennett. The premier, speaking of George E. P. Jones, an aggrieved civil servant cleared of a charge of receiving a benefit, publicly said: "I am not going to talk to you about the Jones boy. I could say a lot . . ." In court, the premier in fact had little to say except the fatally fatuous words, when asked by Mr. Berger if he ever read the papers: "I make the news, I don't read the news." Mr. Berger cor-

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rectly gauged the effect that would have on the high court jurists; Bennett, he said retrospectively, "had done the work for me."

Another case achieved landmark status: the 1973 decision of the Supreme Court of Canada in the Nishga land claims case that recognized the concept of aboriginal title, though the seven justices narrowly held that it had been extinguished in this particular case. It was a triumphant defeat for Canadian native people, an opening to their legal action in similar cases in years to come.

Even while working on the Nishga case, Mr. Berger had a call from Justice Minister John Turner's office offering him an appointment to the Supreme Court of British Columbia. Ms. Swayze is at her best relating the political intricacies and Hamletian weighings attending Berger's acceptance, even unto a panicky attempt to call the whole thing off on the very morning of the ceremony. But Berger won as high praise as a jurist as he had as a lawyer, often in difficult cases overshadowed by the more publicized rights cases.

The apogee of his career was of course his role as commissioner in the Mackenzie Valley natural gas pipeline inquiry. The question was whether to build a pipeline, but the issue was the delicate tracery of ties — of an old culture to an old land, of a politically feeble people to their ancient habits, of man to beast and bird and even snow and ice and — not least — of man to money and his civilized comforts. Even those who never expect to see it recognize in the North a last chance for human innocence, a symbol of pardon for past deprivations.

The dazzling scope, length, and patience of the inquiry clearly signalled Mr. Justice Berger's predispositions. He spun out the "inquiry without walls" — 283 days of testimony, 1,700 witnesses, more than 40,000 pages of transcript — while the American entrepreneurs behind the pipeline bit their nails and the Canadian government fretted in those days of OPEC supremacy. His report, released in 1977, was soft philosophy wrapped

around an unyielding core of absolutism: no pipeline for the northern Yukon ever, none for the Mackenzie Valley for 10 years. The retrospectives of a decade later noted that the report was not only a victory for orderly and sensitive development; ironically, it also saved the investors from a fiasco in light of the subsequent collapse of energy prices.

The denouement of Tom Berger's career as judge was more ironic yet: the advocate of freedom was tripped by the boundaries of freedom — that freedom to speak which both powerfully protects and severely limits the judiciary's expressions. Berger publicly criticized the 1981 constitutional accord. He did so while it was before Parliament. He was out.

There was a brief Indian summer of his Mackenzie Valley days — as head of the Alaska Native Review Commission — but at age 50 Tom Berger appeared to resign too from the higher reaches of Canadian public life; perhaps, in the end, a victim of his own earnestness, a man lacking in humour and the buoyancy of the idiosyncratic, a man of principle who trod close to being a prig for principle. For all her detailing of his career, certainly a useful compilation, Ms. Swayze leaves Berger unexplained and undiscovered. *Hard Choices* doesn't ask enough hard questions. Hagiography ends up by diminishing its subject. Oscar Wilde remarked that it is usually Judas who writes the biography. Perhaps he should.

Trevor Lautens is a Vancouver writer and editor.

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An Unworthy Remembrance

By David Watmough

EMILY CARR

By Ruth Gowers. St. Martin's Press, New York, 1987. 126 pp., illus. \$22.50.

A small book as introduction to the visual and literary art of Victoria's Emily Carr is surely a good idea. A *British* book, thus offering an outsider's perspective, makes a good idea even better — especially for a Canadian.

Unfortunately *Emily Carr* by Ruth Gowers fails dismally as both an exercise in concision and as external illumination of one of our major artists in paint and prose.

The nicely produced, pocket-size volume is one of a feminist line — the Berg Woman's Series — but the contents shed no extra light on the

struggle of a woman artist in an era and in a context which was suffocatingly structured as a man's world.

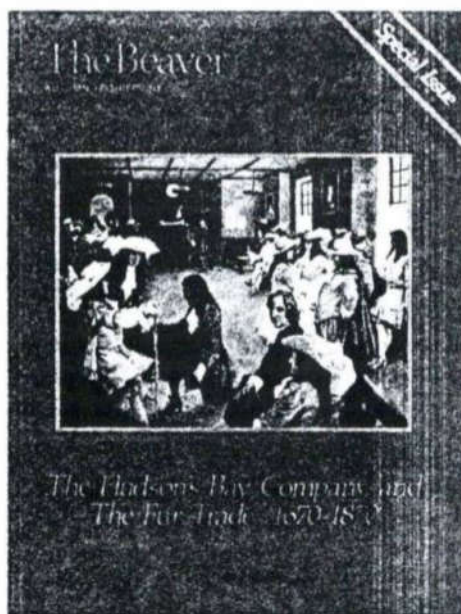
Ruth Gowers, who earned her MA from the University of Victoria, succeeds in establishing from correspondence and diaries how Emily Carr ended up a harridan, but in her two-dimensional portrait never really explains why. This is an account where bald statement invariably takes precedence over reasoned argument.

Nor are Ms. Gowers' pages well served by a cliché-ridden style which includes an excess of grammatical angularities. The generously disposed might forgive this if style was merely subordinate to academic accuracy and insight. But — incredibly — *Emily Carr*, although leaning heavily on such sources as

Maria Tippet's 1979 biography, wholly ignores the major tome on the artist, *The Art of Emily Carr* by Doris Shadbolt, which appeared the same year. This fact alone vitiates any claim to scholarship the pocketbook might otherwise have had.

The photographs are fascinating and the book is mercifully free of the least whiff of patronizing a colonial figure as British readers are introduced to Canada's most important West Coast artist of the early years of this century. The pity is that the introduction could not have been effected via a less banal vehicle.

David Watmough is a Vancouver critic and author.



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THE PACKET

Letters to and from The Editor

Wilson MacDonald and the Bard

I am responding to Cheryl MacDonald's article "A Shakespeare for Canada" (*The Beaver*, April/May 1987).

I found this very interesting, mainly because so few things have been said about [the poet] Wilson [MacDonald] for many years.

I think I can speak of him with some authority, since we were friends (he, his wife, my wife, myself) for a long time.

I was instrumental in getting Wilson invited to Moscow. At that time I was president of the Canadian Soviet Friendship Society, then quite a prestigious organization which later fell victim to the Cold War. I believe Wilson was the first Canadian poet to go to the USSR.

My wife and I arranged to publish his "report" on that trip, titled "On My Own In Moscow". The publisher, Northern Book House, sold many thousands of copies and it has long been out of print.

From my first meeting with Wilson I shared Einstein's assessment of him. I believe many of his poems will gain his memory the recognition he deserved. Not only is "Exit"

unmatched in any language, but his poems on the seasons (every month) which ran in the *Canadian Geographical* and were reissued in book form, are exquisite.

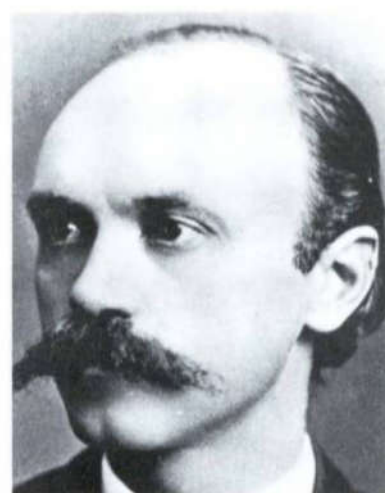
I am very critical of Cheryl MacDonald's notion that Wilson regarded himself as "a Canadian Shakespeare". That's ridiculous slander. Wilson did work for years

(up to his death I think) on a massive Shakespeare Commentary, which deserved publication in full. But it was a scholar-poet's evaluation of Shakespeare, and in no way any claim that Wilson was trying to rival the great man.

Dyson Carter,
Gravenhurst, Ontario.

More Thorns Than Roses

I was interested in Cheryl MacDonald's article on Calixa Lavallée (*The Beaver*, June/July 1987). My grandmother, Kate Fairbanks, studied music with him in Montreal in 1876, and I have two letters written to her by M. Lavallée regretting that she was unable to continue her lessons, (due, I believe, to her mother's death) and sending her a copy of Weber's Works as a memento. He speaks of his experience and philosophy — "In my life I have always met more thorns than roses in my path" — "I remember your sad feelings at our parting and I am drawn intuitively to feelings



Calixa Lavallée:
"Sad feelings".

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that have been the ones of all my life, — Melancholy!!"

I have given copies of the letters to the Public Archives of Canada, as I feel they contribute a small piece to our knowledge of this talented Canadian musician.

Katherine I. Ferguson,
Ottawa.

"Odds Fish!" the King said. "I'll swear I heard a seal bark!"
Nell Gwynne made a face. It was not true that he never said a foolish thing. It was his own fault for rising so early.
Beyond the door, the Lord Privy Seal cleared his throat a second time.
"And no quips about privies!" Nell warned.



"This morning," the King said, yawning, "we are to seal the charter for the Hudson's Bay adventurers. Cousin Rupert will be waiting."

He swept the dogs off the bed with a regal gesture and began pulling on his silk stockings.

"Another day in the life of Charles the Second," he said.

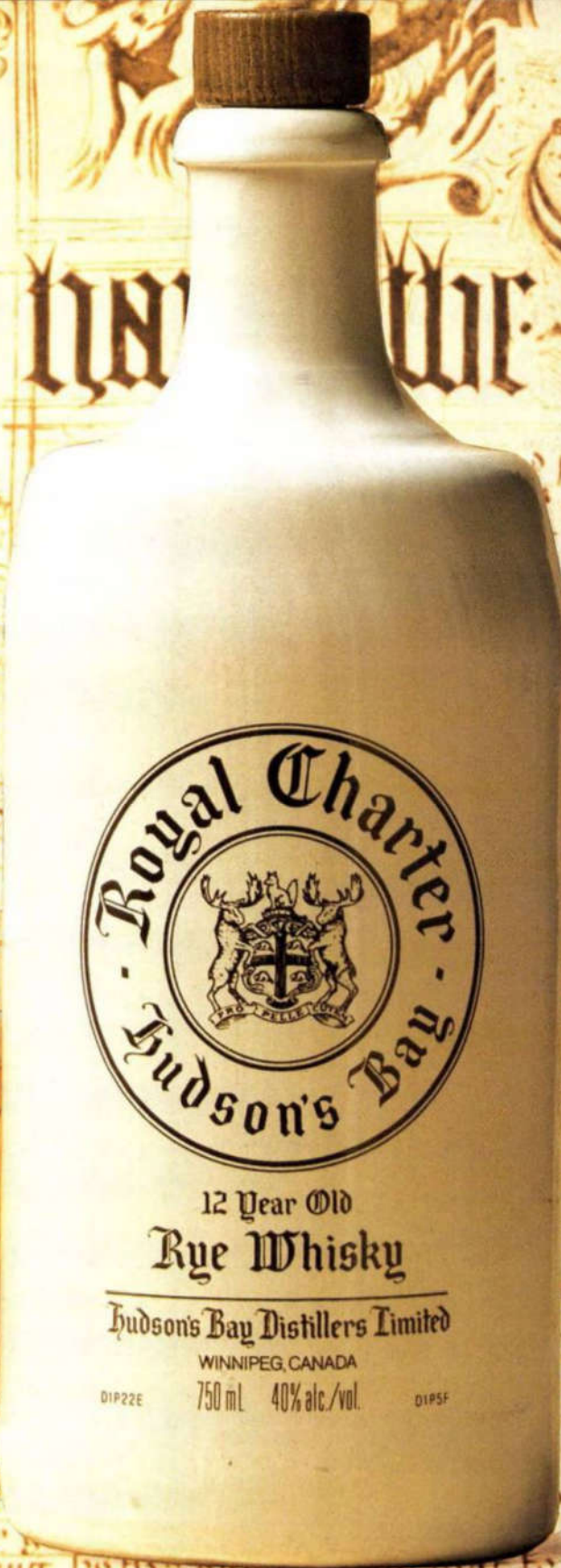
"Charles the Third," Nell corrected him. Her first king, he was her third Charles.

It was May the second, 1670.

The long life of the Hudson's Bay Company was about to begin.

***The Great Fur Opera* — the hilarious spoof of the history of the Hudson's Bay Company written by Kildare Dobbs with illustrations by Ronald Searle — has become a Canadian comedy classic since it was published in 1970, the Honourable Company's 300th anniversary year. *The Beaver* is now offering a limited number of a special presentation edition at the low price of \$19.98 (postage paid) while supplies last. For your copy of *The Great Fur Opera* send your cheque or money order to *The Beaver*, 450 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 0E7.**

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